

## **Choose Your Master: God or Money**

### **Matthew 6:19-34 (Pastor Heo)**

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#### ***Treasures in Heaven***

*19 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, 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. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!*

*24 “No one can serve two masters. 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 both God and Money.*

#### ***Do not Worry***

*25 “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 important than food, and the body more important 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 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?*

*28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies 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, O you of little faith?*

*31 So do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

Amen. This is the living Word of our Lord Jesus Christ. May God bless all of us with this living Word of our Lord and King, Jesus.

### ***Today’s topic is: Choose your Master: GOD or Money?***

Did you choose? Did you choose already your Lord? You know, we have a tendency to divide life into two parts: the spiritual and the material. But this is not right. Our Lord Jesus makes no such division. In his many parables, in his many teachings, Jesus makes clear a right attitude toward materials. A right attitude toward money is a mark of true spirituality.

We know in the Bible, the Pharisees loved money and used money to make money in the name of “religion.” You know, if we have the true righteousness of Jesus Christ in our lives, we will have a right, proper attitude toward materials, toward money.

In the Bible, Jesus never praises poverty anywhere. Jesus never criticizes being rich materially because we know God made all things including our clothes, food, precious metals. Anything and everything, God made them, and God has declared all things he has made “good.” So, it is not wrong for us to possess materials, but it is wrong for materials to possess us.

## **Materials vs. Materialism**

Materials themselves are not bad, but Materialism is bad. Materialism enslaves our hearts, our wills, our souls, even our spirits. The Bible never says, “Money is evil. Money is the root of all kinds of evil.” Do you like money? But, the Bible says, “The LOVE of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows and griefs.” (1 Tim 6:10)

And Heb 13:5 says, “Therefore, keep your lives free from the love of money. Be content with what you have because God has said, ‘I will never leave you. I will never forsake you.’” You know, the Bible says there will be three kinds of Loves that will grow and grow as the last day comes nearer and nearer:

1. The love of Self
2. The love of Stuff (Money)
3. The love of Sex (Pleasure) - The love of physical pleasure, the love of lust.

Shall we see once again, from verse 19-24? Let me read, you can see together.

Hate the one and love the other: idolize one, demonize the other.

We need to underline, “You cannot serve both God and Money.” You know the literal meaning in the Greek Bible is, “You cannot be a SLAVE both to God and money.” Whether we like it or not, we are made to be a slave to somebody or something. Romans 6:16 says, “Do you not know that when you offer yourselves to somebody to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey?” But, even though we are slaves, we have the right to choose our own Master, but we cannot have two Masters or more. We can have two friends or more, but we can have only one Master, only one Lord.

## **God vs. Other Gods**

Then, we need to notice, Jesus does not say in the last sentence, “You cannot serve both God and Mohammed” - or God and Buddha - or God and somebody else - or God and something

else. But Jesus says, “You cannot serve both God and Money.”

It means, to Man, to human beings, money is a god, practically. Money is more influential, more powerful in a human’s practical life. The power of money, the influence of money is almost equal to God in our practical lives. We cannot deny it.

Then, the first verse, verse 19...

It means it’s very safe. It means it will last forever and forever, “where thieves do not break in and steal.” What does this mean? To “store up our treasures in heaven”? You know the Earth is the symbol of what is temporary. Then, Heaven means the symbol of something that is eternal. It means, USE what is temporary FOR what is eternal.

## **Check your spending style**

At this moment we need to check our money spending style. For example, how much do you spend for food? How much do you spend for your clothing? How much do you spend for your housing and furniture? How much do you spend for ONE cigarette? For the lottery? For our hobbies or sports? How much do you spend for face renovation? How much do you spend for helping others? How much do you spend for winning souls to Christ? And how much do you spend for tithes and offerings?

Yes, there are MANY ways for us to store treasures in heaven, not on earth, but the Bible is very clear in teaching us one of the BEST ways for us to store our treasures in heaven is tithes and offerings. That’s why the Bible says this:

*Malachi 3:8-10*

*8 “Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, “How do we rob you?” “In tithes and offerings. 9 You are under a curse -- the whole nation of you -- because you are robbing me. 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food [the symbol of my treasure] in my house [literally, it means the temple, the symbol of heaven]. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”*

[One of my personal favorite verses]

This is the Word of God Almighty.

During our Christian lives, we do continually tithes and offerings, but we need to know the true meaning of tithes and offerings, biblically - for God and for me. At this moment, I want to say just six points about the meaning of tithes and offerings, briefly.

## **6 Points about the Meaning of Tithes and Offerings**

## **1: Store up treasures in heaven**

First, as mentioned in Malachi 3:8-10, tithes and offerings is one of the best ways to store up our treasures in heaven. Please remember whenever you give your offerings and tithes.

## **2: Tithes and offerings is the action of obedience.**

Tithes and offerings is not an optional choice, but an essential command in the Bible, not only in the Old Testament, but also in the New Testament. Already we read together Malachi 3:10, "Bring your whole tithe." And Exodus 23:15 says, "No one is to appear before God empty handed." Also in the New Testament, it's the same. In the New Testament, in Matthew chapter 23, Jesus our Lord agrees that we should give our tithe. Second Corinthians 9:7 says, "That's why each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give. Not reluctantly or under compulsion because God loves a cheerful giver."

## **3: Tithes and offerings is a thanksgiving sacrifice.**

We can show our thanksgiving to God by giving, by our action.

## **4: Also, tithes and offerings is an acknowledgement of God's ownership and our stewardship.**

## **5: Tithes and offerings is a kind of prayer for more blessing.**

Also, tithes and offerings is sowing with the expectation of reaping. Also a holy investment for harvest. You know, Jesus says, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." We are not allowed to test God. Do you agree? But, in the Bible, in the whole Bible, there is only one area in which we are allowed, we are encouraged to test God. This area is tithe. We read already, God encourages us, God challenges us to "Bring the whole tithe and then test me in this and see if I won't bless you more and more! I will open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for that."

Also 2 Corinthians 9:6 says, "Remember this: whoever sows little will reap little, whoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly, but whoever sows generously (bountifully) will reap generously (bountifully)."

## **6: A proclamation of freedom from the Love of Money**

And finally, let me say one more, tithes and offerings is a proclamation of freedom from the love of money. We know the last sentence, “We cannot serve God and Money” but we can serve God with money. With our tithes and offerings, we say to money (please, do you have money in your pocket? Say to your money), “I need you, but I am not your slave. You are my slave. Please follow me, I don’t follow you. You have no right to control me, but I have the right to control you.” We can say this to money with our tithes and offerings.

Please remember, God knows we need money. So, if we serve God, God will provide us with money, as much as we need. But, money doesn’t know we need God. That’s why, if we serve money, money gives us only worry. So, the next topic is worry. In the next passage, we can see the word “worry” at least 6 or 7 times. Worry, worry, worry. Do you like worry? Please, do not worry about worry. Shall we see the next paragraph? At this moment, I bless all of us, God may bless, so that we may be free from worry. Verse 25:

### ***The Real Reality of Worry (v. 25-34)***

At this moment, we need to know what is the real reality of worry. I want to say at least four points about the reality of worry.

#### **1: Please remember, worry is totally needless, useless, and even positively, actively harmful, injurious.**

Worry it cannot affect the Past - the Past is passed. Like this, worry about Tomorrow is useless. Worry about Tomorrow is a wasted effort. You know, worry about Tomorrow can do nothing for Tomorrow except taking away the joy, energy, and effectiveness of Today. God has provided for us Today. You know, the regrets of the Past and the worry of Tomorrow destroys the quality of Today. Then, worry is worse than useless. Worry is harmful - positively, actively harmful.

We know already, worry is one of the great causes of physical sicknesses and diseases, such as headaches, stomach ulcers, coronary trouble. Proverbs 17:22 says, “A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a worrying heart dries the bones.” How right it is.

- Worry wears out our heart, our mind, our soul, our body.
- Worry affects our judgement.
- Worry weakens our decision power.
- And finally, worry makes us gradually, progressively unable to deal with our life.

Please remember that.

## **2: Second, worry is blind.**

Worry makes us blind. Worry makes us unable to see, unable to learn the lesson from nature. Jesus says, "Look at the birds of the air..." Do you know, do you believe that we are more valuable than the birds of the air? Do you agree? And Jesus says, "Look at the grass, the lilies of the field..." Do you believe we are much, much more valuable than grass, flowers. Do you believe this? We are created in his image.

But remember, Jesus does not say, "Look at the birds of the land... Look at the birds of the tree..." But Jesus says, "Look at the birds of the AIR." You know, to be in the air, to be in the sky, birds should fly, and fly continually with their eyes opened. Jesus does not say, "Look at the lilies of the bottle... Lilies of the living room..." But Jesus says, "Lilies of the field." You know, to remain standing in the field, lilies should put their roots under the ground, and should draw water from below, and should confront the wind and the sunshine - sometimes cold, sometimes hot. It means, they are in the RIGHT place, doing the right jobs according to God's original designs for them. But they do not worry, they depend on God. God never fails.

"No worry" does not mean "no work, or no plan, no thought." "No worry" means "no worry" and being in the right place according to God's original design for us, and doing the RIGHT jobs according to God's original design for us. Where is the right place we should be according to God's original designs? The answer is we must be in God, in Jesus Christ.

## **3: Worry is essentially irreligious.**

Please remember, worry is a matter of the heart, not a matter of outward circumstances. In the same circumstances, one man can be peaceful, can be serene, and another man can be worried to death. Peace and worry come not from circumstances, but from the heart.

You know one day a gentleman met a beggar on the street, and that gentleman said to the beggar, "Hey, my friend, may God give you a good day."

The beggar said, "I thank God that I never had a better day."

Then, the gentleman said again, "My friend, may God give you a happy life."

The beggar said, "I thank God I was never unhappy."

Then that gentleman was surprised and said, "What do you mean?"

Then the beggar said, "Well, when it is fine, I thank God. When it is raining, I thank God. When it is cloudy, I thank God. When I have much, plenty, I thank God. When I am hungry, I thank God. Because God's will is my will. Because whatever pleases God pleases me. Why should I say I'm unhappy because I'm happy?"

Then in astonishment, in surprise, the gentleman asked, "Who are you?"

The beggar answered, "I'm a king."

The gentleman asked again, "What? You are a king? If you are a king, where's your country? Where's your kingdom?"

The beggar answered, "In my heart."

Proverbs 4:23 says, “More than anything else, above all else, keep your heart, guard your heart because it is the source of life, the fountain of life, the wellspring of life.”

Please remember, if we think about a matter with fear over and over, it is worry. But, if we think about Jesus Christ with the Bible over and over, it is meditation. So, we have already a great ability to meditate very well. No problem.

#### **4: Worry is a sin to God**

Let me say lastly one point. Please remember, worry is mistrust, unbelief, disbelief to God. In conclusion, worry is a sin to God. Shall we say together, “Worry is a sin to God.” In verse 30, Jesus says, “Oh you of little faith.” Oh you of no faith. What does this mean? This means that worry is evidence of little faith, no faith. And verse 32 says, “for the pagans run after all these things and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.”

This means that worry is the pagan’s lifestyle. Today in our version, worry is the unbeliever’s lifestyle.

Yes, outwardly, we may worry because of this, because of this, because of that, such and such, many things we may worry, but the fundamental reason, the basic reason why I worry is because I do not trust in God, because I do not believe in Jesus Christ. Please remember, as long as we live in this world, the fundamental remedy, the fundamental solution for worry is believe in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord and King and Master, really, truly, and act on that faith in Jesus Christ.

#### **Jesus gives peace of heart**

Jesus died for us. Who died for us except for Jesus Christ? Jesus died for us, and that same Jesus who died for us and rose again from the dead gives us eternal life, abundant life. Jesus says, “I give you eternal life. You shall never perish, no one shall snatch you out of my hand.” Just if we believe in Jesus Christ, that eternal life is ours. That abundant life is ours. Jesus says, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust in me. I give you my peace, peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as this world gives. So, do not let your hearts be troubled. Do not be afraid.”

We know we want peace of heart. We want, we need that kind of peace. But this kind of peace can be found only in Jesus Christ. First Peter 5:7 says, “Cast, throw away, cast all your anxieties, all your worry, on God because he cares for us.” Trust in Jesus Christ and to worry cannot go together.

#### **Choose**

Today is the moment. Today is the day for us to choose our true Master, our Lord: God or Material, God or Money, God or Worry.

First, Philippians 4:6-7 says, "Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God and the peace of God which transcends, which surpasses all understanding, all wisdom, all knowledge will keep your hearts and minds in our Lord, Jesus Christ." Shall we pray together?

I want each of us to take a short time before God, very honestly, please, right now, ask to yourself, WHO is your Lord? Who is your Master? Truly, practically? And if your Lord, true Lord, is Jesus Christ, let us give thanks to him, who died on the cross for our sins, and who gave us eternal life, salvation, real peace, real joy, real safety.

Let's pray.

*Father God,*

*Thank you so, so much for giving us real freedom, real joy, real peace that cannot be found in this world.*

*Father God, we know only we can be free from all kinds of worries, all kinds of anxieties, all kinds of troubles only in our Lord Jesus Christ, only by trusting in our God who is our Creator, who is our Maker, who is our Designer, who is our God, also Father.*

*Father God, help us please, not only through our tongues, but also from our deep hearts, our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ may be acceptable by you as real faith, real trusting.*

*Father God, fill us with the Holy Spirit. We cannot do that without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, without the baptism of the Holy Spirit, without the filling of the Holy Spirit it is impossible for us to get victory against the temptation of the material world in this world.*

*Father God, by your Spirit, by your power, by your wisdom, let us be victorious in this world. And let us live your life, heavenly life in this world, even though our body is here on this earth, we are not of this world because our citizenship is in heaven already. Help us to store our treasures in heaven eternally, not temporarily on Earth.*

*Thank you for your teaching us, thank you for your guiding us,*

*In Jesus' name I pray,*

*Amen.*