

**Reading:** Matthew Chapter 6: v. 19-34.

**Title:** Treasure and Trust God in 2019.

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

<sup>22</sup> “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup> But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

<sup>24</sup> “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

<sup>25</sup> “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? <sup>27</sup> Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

<sup>28</sup> “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; <sup>29</sup> and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

<sup>31</sup> “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ <sup>32</sup> For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. <sup>34</sup> Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

### **Introduction**

Last month in Matthew's Gospel we learnt that Jesus told the Jewish Scribes and Pharisees that there is no reward from God when we do our charitable deeds to please men.

We were also told that our fasting must be done in secret.

Jesus also attacked the religious leaders for the way in which they prayed.

If these religious leaders prayed openly to show off and impress people, then God would not reward their prayers.

We also learnt that as believers in Jesus Christ, God forgives our sins.

However, we must be willing to forgive others who sin against us.

If we don't forgive others, then we can't expect God to forgive us our sins.

Jesus is staying on a similar theme in His sermon, but now He challenges us about the way in which we live our lives.

Jesus speaks about the sinful nature that we are born with.

He offers us a different way to live which is only possible if we embrace His teachings and receive a New Nature from God.

If you are a Christian today, I expect that at some time during 2019 that you will have a battle between your two natures; the nature that you are born with and the nature of the Holy Spirit who dwells within you.

It is only as you surrender fully to your New Nature that you will be enabled to live the life that Jesus is talking about in this sermon.

### **1. Where is your treasure? Heaven or Earth? – v. 19-21.**

Firstly, we need to discover what Jesus means by treasures on earth and treasures in Heaven.

- a) Treasures on earth - I think Jesus means the things that money can buy.

Jesus uses the word treasure because treasure is something that we value highly.

The key to understanding this challenge is in the words "Do not lay up for yourselves".

This phrase suggests that you are putting value and trust in your earthly possessions.

In other words, **you value more the things that money can buy than the things that money can't buy.**

Money can't buy **joy and happiness and peace in your heart.**

Although the advertisers of goods and products suggest that you will be happy if you buy their products, that does not happen in the long term.

Successful companies are always bringing out new products because they know that in reality it is the **thought of new things** that appear to make you happy, not actually the products themselves.

**Any happiness that you can gain from things you buy is only temporary.**

Jesus says that our treasure on earth can be **stolen, eaten by moths, or in the case of metal, it can eventually rust out.**

Jesus is saying here that we must not put our trust in **temporary things** because they are only temporary and a means to an end.

We have to have some things in order to function in this world, but we shouldn't treasure them.

- b) **Treasurers in Heaven** – The first thing we are clear about here is that treasures in Heaven are eternal. **Nobody can take them away.** They will **never wear out**, or **break**. To understand what treasure in Heaven is we need to fast forward to **Matthew Chapter 19: v. 16-22.**

**(in N.K.J.)**

<sup>16</sup> Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" <sup>17</sup> So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

<sup>18</sup> He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' <sup>19</sup> 'Honor your father and *your* mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' " <sup>20</sup> The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." <sup>22</sup> But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

The rich young ruler in the story went away sad **because he was rich and was trusting in his own money to provide his happiness.**

Jesus said that if he wanted to have treasure in heaven, then he had to sell what he had, give this to the poor, and then follow Jesus.

So treasure in Heaven is **not about what we receive**, but it is **about what we give away to those who have need of it.**

**In v.21 Jesus tells us that our hearts can be judged by our treasure.**

If we have a heart for God and His work on this present earth, then we will not be overly concerned to amass money, wealth and possessions.

**If we do get money, we will be more interested in giving it away to those in need, than spending it ourselves on earthly goods.**

## 2. **How is your eyesight? – v. 22-23.**

Jesus uses the **eye as a way of illustrating his point.**

Good eyes produce **good vision** and bad eyes produce **blurred vision**.

Most adults wear glasses today. They need to have their eyes corrected with lenses.

**About 20 years ago** I discovered that a good eye doctor can discover things that are wrong in your body, **just by studying your eyes.**

I was honoured to have the best hospital eye doctor living near my home in London.

He had a small clinic attached to his home and when he was not acting as a consultant for a top London eye hospital, he saw selected patients from his home.

**I was one of his patients. His name was Doctor Arisu.**

Once I had an appointment to have an eye test with this doctor.

He asked me about my health first.

I told him that my doctor thought that I might have a disease which is called M.S. (Multiple Sclerosis). Dr. Arisu told me very strongly, "you do not have this disease. If you did, it would be revealed in your eyes".

He went on to explain to me that many diseases can be discovered early, by examining the eyes. This doctor was absolutely right.

The illustration that Jesus uses here is very up to date.

We now know 2,000 years later that your eyes will reveal the health of your body.

In actual fact I was suffering from stress, and not the disease of M.S. and I needed a rest.

My medical doctor listened to my eye doctor and told me to take a 3 month break from my work and then I would be 100% better.

My medical doctor got it absolutely right. At the time I was working too hard and dealing with very serious pastoral and other issues in my Church and ministry.

My body needed a rest, I took a three- month break, and then my body was healed.

So what Jesus is saying here is that the eye is the window by which light registers on the body, and things are brought to your mind.

If our thinking or perception is good and clear, then the rest of our body or life will be good.

However, if our eye registers lust, covetousness, or any other sin, then it will destroy our body and life-style.

It is no wonder that our thought patterns are a battle ground for the devil.

If the devil can influence our mind, then it will not be too long before he influences our behaviour.

Jesus says that you have to be very careful how you process the things that you see.

Today we live in a computer, social media world.

Many things are posted on Facebook and other media accounts that are definitely not suitable for the eye. This is why I cancelled my Facebook account.

You can arrange a block on unsuitable material from being presented on many computer and internet sites. I have a block on my Youtube account, and although it blocks some things that are not really harmful to me, it is worth keeping the block on for the sake of preventing the unsuitable material. You can also download for free a Christian blocking programme that will prevent any material being searched on your web-site.

This is a good thing to do. If you haven't done it yet, why not do it and save your eyes from contaminating your life.

In Philippians 4: v. 8-9 we are told to think or meditate only on the good things in life.

#### (Philippians 4: v. 8-9 in N.K.J.)

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. <sup>9</sup> The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

### 3. Are you divided between serving God and the Money God? V.24.

In the New King James translation of this verse it says "You cannot serve God and mammon..."

"**Mammon**" is a Chaldean word for the money-god.

It is a word that has been used to describe the system of materialism.

This system has a strong influence on society today.

It is suggested by this verse that either money controls us as its master and influences our decisions and life-style, or God controls us and we then use money for His plans and purposes.

It is very difficult to live in this world without money.

God is not suggesting that we live in complete poverty.

God is saying that money can have a very strong controlling influence upon our lives.

Therefore, if we let God be the master or controller of our lives, then He will influence our decisions concerning money.

The story of William Colgate is very famous and is worth repeating in case you have not heard it.

The Colgate family fled from England and settled in America about 150 years ago.

Robert Colgate, William's father was a farmer.

William was interested in "Soap Making". After his first attempt at business failed, he met a friend who witnessed to him about giving money to God.

He read to him from Genesis 28: v. 20-21.

( in N.K.J.)

<sup>20</sup> Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, <sup>21</sup> so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God."

The man said to William, "give your heart to Jesus Christ, give to God all that belongs to Him, make an honest soap, and God will prosper you."

William decided to tithe 10% of all of his income to God.

Later William gave 20% of his income to God, and then 40%.

God prospered him so much he decided to give 90% of his income away to God's work and live on 10%.

Although William died in 1837, his memory and his products live on.

I couldn't survive without Colgate Sensitive Toothpaste. I need to bring 11 month's supply from the U.K. because I cannot buy a toothpaste in Japan that cures my very sensitive teeth.

I can't promise you a financial empire if you tithe your income and let God control your money, but I can promise you that God will make very good use of the money that you give Him, if you surrender it to His will.

#### 4. Are you worrying about the future? – v. 25-34.

This is our first Sunday in 2019. The whole future of this year lies ahead.

One of the things that will damage us in our hearts is if we "worry".

Jesus tells us not to worry about anything.

Jesus highlights nature, which He created, as an illustration to encourage us not to worry.

So what is "worry"?

It is described as being overly anxious about something, or somebody.

Jesus tells us that worry is unproductive.

Worry does not produce anything that is worth anything. It is totally unproductive.

Jesus tells us that worry is unnecessary.

Jesus points to the birds of the air and the lilies of the field to show us that in the same way that God cares for His creation, He will care for us His created people.

Jesus had to trust God for His provisions while on this earth, so He is not preaching about something which He has not experienced.

Jesus tells us that worry is unworthy.

Jesus tells us that it is not worth the effort to worry about the future.

Jesus tells us in v. 33 that we have a perfect reason not to worry.

We should let God take responsibility for our future. All we have to do is to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness."

(v. 33 in N.K.J.)

<sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

We must not miss the point here.

Jesus is promising to take care of His children.

Today we can become one of God's children, and we will never need to worry.

How do we seek God's righteousness?

We need to understand these three words, Realise, Repent and Receive.

You need to realise that you are born into this world in separation from your creator God.

You are already condemned to die and receive punishment for your sin.

Your life is in danger!

**(Romans 2: v. 5-8 in N.L.T.)**

<sup>5</sup> But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. <sup>6</sup> He will judge everyone according to what they have done. <sup>7</sup> He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that God offers. <sup>8</sup> But he will pour out his anger and wrath on those who live for themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness.

God requires you to **"repent"**. This means to change your mind about your thinking about the God of the Bible. It means to believe what the Bible teaches about the God of the Bible.

It also means to **feel ashamed and sorry about the fact that your sins have offended a Holy God, your Creator.**

**(Acts 17: v. 24-31 in N.L.T.)**

<sup>24</sup> "He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn't live in man-made temples, <sup>25</sup> and human hands can't serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. <sup>26</sup> From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries. <sup>27</sup> His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. <sup>28</sup> For in him we live and move and exist. As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' <sup>29</sup> And since this is true, we shouldn't think of God as an idol designed by craftsmen from gold or silver or stone. <sup>30</sup> "God overlooked people's ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him. <sup>31</sup> For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead."

Finally, you need to **"Receive"** God's love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

**John 3: v. 16.**

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

**John 1: v. 12 – N.K.J.**

<sup>12</sup> But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

Many people struggle at this point. They want to earn their Salvation. They can't accept that God has already paid the price for their sin, and that Salvation is FREE.

**(Ephesians 2: v.8)**

<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God.

**The challenge at the beginning of this year is to give your life to Jesus Christ and live for the glory of God.**

Amen.