

Title: MONEY PRINCIPLES, MATTHEW 6:24-34
(Chatham, NJ; 02/27/11, AM) [Pc – Topical]

Theme: Jesus commands certain behaviors and attitudes based on principles that are woven into the created order of human life.

Purpose: To enlighten the audience to these principles and to demonstrate that they are things which cannot be violated without doing harm to ourselves.

Introduction:

1. At first glance we might look at this section of the Sermon on the Mount as another set of demands.
2. Though that is true, it contains more than injunctions.
3. The demands are based on spiritual truths that are built into the created order and cannot be ignored.

I. No One Can Serve Two Masters, 6:24.

A. Kingdoms in Conflict.

1. Psalm 62:10 and 119:30 express the conflicting loyalty for the human heart.
2. Jesus takes it even to a different level when he said the problem is that we want the praise from men and not from God, John 5:44.

B. Mammon – an egocentric covetousness which claims man's heart and estranges him from God.

1. The first commandment was to have no gods before God.
2. The last of the Ten was similar; the injunction against covetousness was an injunction also against idolatry.
3. In the commandment it is directed to those things that belong to another, but Jesus expands it to refer to an insatiable desire to acquire material things.
4. Colossians 3:5 coupled with verse 2 demonstrates the conflict.
5. Covetousness is idolatry, but Paul has told the church to set their minds on heavenly things, where Christ is seated.
6. Paul both warns of the danger and also moderates his appeal to the rich, 1 Tim. 6:9-10 & 17-19.

C. Choose your master or things will master you.

1. The problem isn't money; it's covetousness or the inordinate desire to have it.
2. It is selfish gain not used to the glory of God.
3. Store up treasure in heaven instead.

II. Life Is More than Food; the Body Is More than Clothes, 25.

A. Life re-defined.

1. We've already learned in this Gospel that man lives not by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from God, 4:4.
2. It is hard sometimes for people to look beyond their need for survival.
3. But that is what Jesus does.
4. Life does not consist of the jump from one meal to another.
5. There is more.

B. The body re-imagined.

1. We forget that Christianity elevated the world of matter by reminding us that all things were created by God.
2. The body is more than bodily appearance.

3. It becomes the temple to house the Holy Spirit, and it is the resurrected body that we will take into eternity.
- C. Both are good in the eyes of God but different than the way the world defines them.
1. In 2 Timothy 4:4-5 we are informed that we can find joy in these things because they are taken with thanksgiving.
 2. God knows we need food and clothing.
 3. Yet as above there is a conflict for our hearts; here the conflict revolves around survival and appearance.
 4. We turn them into gods and religion becomes satisfying their desires.
 5. Habakkuk 3:17-19 tells us that we can find joy in God even when those things are not present.

III. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

- A. The paradox of control through powerlessness.
1. Psalm 131:1 demonstrates the problem of trying to take on too much.
 2. Phil. 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:7 perhaps were written for just such situations.
 3. Essentially there comes a point when we realize we have no control over life (27) or the future.
 4. Once we realize this powerlessness, we find that we can take care of the daily things that confront us without worrying about tomorrow.
- B. The focus is on today.
1. I can only handle the fear, anxiety, and fretting of one day.
 2. Anything more overwhelms me.
 3. Do what you can today and leave the rest in God's hands.
 4. Man wasn't meant to run the universe.

Conclusion:

1. Don't lay up treasure on earth but in heaven. This is the application of serving one master.
2. Seek first the Kingdom; God will take care of the rest.
3. Recognize what you can and can't control; trust God with tomorrow.
4. These are blessings for the believer.
5. Jesus seeks to turn us back to those things that God has designed into the fabric of human existence.
6. Deviate from them at your own risk.
7. Follow them and receive God's blessing.