

# Matthew 6:19-23. Christ Forbids Covetousness and Double-Mindedness.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of laying up treasures in heaven through good works and faith in Jesus Christ, and warns against the folly of covetousness and double-mindedness.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:19, Matthew 6:22, Luke 12:34, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Ephesians 1:18, Colossians 3:1, 1 Timothy 6:17, Revelation 14:13

**Topics:** "Covetousness", "Faith Works"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the folly of covetousness and the importance of laying up treasures in heaven through good works. He emphasizes that while we cannot gain heaven by good works, they are the fruits of faith and a way to please God. Mortimer highlights the need for the eyes of our minds to be enlightened by God's Holy Spirit to see the glory of God in Christ Jesus. He explains that our actions reveal whether we are spiritually blind or awakened to the truth of God's love and salvation.

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## Transcript

Our Savior had exposed the apparently good actions of the Pharisees, as their prayers, fastings, almsgivings. He now reproves their wicked practices. The first thing he attacks is their covetousness,--their delight in laying up earthly treasures. In those days riches consisted partly in valuable clothes, and therefore He speaks of moth and rust corrupting.

The Lord shows, in the first place, the folly of covetousness. Riches make themselves wings, and fly away. How foolish, then, to set the heart upon them! But if we do not lose them, we must leave them. We brought nothing into this world, and we can carry nothing out; it is therefore evident to reason, that if there is another world in which we shall eternally dwell, we ought to be extremely anxious to lay up treasures there.

But how are we to lay up treasures in heaven? By good works. Paul, in his epistle to Timothy, says, "Charge those who are rich in this world that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute; willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." But some may inquire, "Can we gain heaven by good works?" O no. Jesus Christ has gained heaven by his righteousness, and he freely bestows this heaven on all who believe in him. We cannot lay up treasures there, until we have believed in Him. We lay up

treasures there, when we do things that please God. Good works are the fruits of faith. It is written, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." It is added, "Their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13.) These blessed dead had believed in Christ; therefore their works were accepted. The Pharisees could not please God; they could not lay up treasures in heaven. And why not? Because the eyes of their minds were shut; and they saw not the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus.

How great is the darkness of the unawakened mind! God alone, by his Holy Spirit, can enlighten this darkness. Jesus came to give sight to the blind. Has he given it to us? Our actions show whether he has or not. When we see a blind person, we are not always aware at first that he is blind; but if we watch him closely we soon discover his condition. If a mad dog pass near him, he does not try to avoid it; and if the most splendid illuminations be displayed, he does not stop to admire. The actions of men show clearly whether they are blind or not. Unawakened souls evince no dread of hell, no desire after heaven, no contempt for earth, no love for Christ. God frowns, but they are not alarmed; He stretches out his arms, but they perceive it not; He opens the gate of heaven, they do not strive to enter it; He points to the abyss of hell, they do not shrink back; He lifts up his crucified Son, they are not softened, or subdued.

There is an eye to the mind--if that eye be shut, we can do nothing right. This is what our Lord meant when he declared, "The light of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye be single, (or clear,) your whole body shall be full of light; but if your eye be evil, (or blind,) your whole body shall be full of darkness." When the eye of the mind is made clear, then we begin to act aright, and not until then.

Do we wish to know where our treasure is? Let us inquire where our heart is. They are in the same place. If our affections are set on things above, then we may know that we have treasures there; but if our heart is in our possessions, whether they be few or many, small or great, there our treasure is. Some unhappy people have shown in their last hours that their hearts were fixed upon some earthly trifles. A vain and foolish girl has been haunted in her expiring moments by the thoughts of her new dresses. A miser has been known eagerly to clench paper in his trembling hands, thinking it was his money. Had these dying people possessed treasures in heaven, they would not have clung so closely to their perishing property on earth.

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