

Mania of Materialism  
Matthew 6:19-24

- A. You've probably heard the word "Mania"?
1. It describes a type of insanity, a derangement of the intellectual powers.
  2. There is a *mania* to which even mentally healthy people are subject — materialism.
    - a. It's like when a man gets a new set of golf clubs, & spends every waking hour cleaning them & preparing for the next round of golf.
    - b. Or when someone takes-on a new hobby or interest, & they just can't get their mind on anything else.
- B. When Jesus warned us about materialism, He was talking about the mania of "storing up [our] treasures on earth".
1. He was referring to the habit of hoarding wealth to the point that one's objective in life became the amassing of it (stuff).

[A mania (insanity) like that can master one's life, & that's when it becomes a danger to our souls.]

- I. Materialism can master our affections (6:19-21)

Matthew 6:19-21

19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth & rust destroy, & where thieves break in & steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, & where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 **for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**"

A. The heart (21) IS who you are as a spiritual being; it controls your affections --- or what you love most.

1. If your heart dwells on the material things (rather than spiritual), then material things will control your affections.

a. And that's not supposed to happen to us (Matt 22:37; 1 John 2:15-17).

b. That's what happened to the Rich Young Ruler.

Matthew 19:16, 21-22

16 And someone came to Him & said, "**Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?**"

21 Jesus said to him, "**If you wish to be complete**, go & sell your possessions & give to the poor, & you will have treasure in heaven; & come, follow Me." 22 But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.

- He wanted to "DO" something for eternal life, alright.

- But everything he had ever done before brought him some kind of a material or monetary return.

- He was a Rich Young Ruler!

- So apparently he ONLY wanted to do those things that would allow him to keep what he had --- or, that would bring him even more wealth.

2. No one is quite so helpless as one who is controlled by the desire for wealth (or any material thing for that matter).

(6:19-20)

B. The danger is that when your affections are controlled by material things, your heart becomes blinded to their perishable nature.

James 5:1-3 (Unjust landowners)

5 Come now, you rich, weep & howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. 2

***Your riches have rotted & your garments have become moth-eaten. 3 Your gold & your silver have rusted;*** & their rust will be a witness against you & will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!

1. Our main problem with this world is our failure to realize just how transient things truly are; they last only a short time.
2. We sometimes fail to see the comparison of the few years we live on this earth with the eternity that faces us when life is over.
3. But when our perspective is straightened out (by what Jesus said), then we realize the perishable nature of it all.

Proverbs 23:4-5

4 ***Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, cease from your consideration of it.*** 5 When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.

C. In summary, when your heart is mastered by what you find here on earth, then you cannot store up treasures in heaven too.

1. Jesus' point (21) was that you can't have it both ways; you can't put your affections in both places.
  - a. If your heart is controlled by a desire for wealth, then you have just removed your affection for the treasures in heaven.
  - b. And not only that, but you will find yourself in spiritual grave danger.

1 Timothy 6:9-10

9 But ***those who want to get rich fall into temptation & a snare & many foolish & harmful desires which plunge men into ruin & destruction.*** 10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, & some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith & pierced themselves with many griefs.

[How is this done? How do you store up treasures in Heaven? By doing good works with what you already have (1 Tim 6:17-19). A Texas oilman said, "The best way to lay up treasures in heaven is to invest your wealth in people who are going there."]

II. Materialism can master (reverse) our sense of right & wrong (6:22-23)

Matthew 6:22-23

22 "***The eye is the lamp of the body***; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

A. Jesus used the eye to illustrate what He had been talking about (6:19-21; storing up treasure).

1. A clear eye helps us walk in light, but a bad eye causes us to walk in darkness.

a. His point: A clear eye is seeking heavenly treasure, while the bad is desperately searching for earthly treasure.

b. So it's all a matter of focus, priority.

2. What difference does it make?

a. It's the difference between living with God & living separated from God in sin

John 3:20-21

20 "For ***everyone who does evil hates the Light***, & does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 "But ***he who practices the truth comes to the Light***, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

3. Jesus is saying (6:22-23) that you are afflicted with a mania for material wealth, then your ability tell right from wrong — will be afflicted also (Heb 5:13-14)

[A devotion to material things is deceptive (as we read in 1 Tim 6:9-10); it can make you think you are in the light when you are really darkness!]

III. Materialism can master our lives (6:24)

Matthew 6:24

24 "**No one can serve two masters**; for either he will hate the one & love the other, or he will be devoted to one & despise the other. You cannot serve God & wealth.

A. Slavery was a big part of Jesus' society.

1. They knew what He meant when he said, "No one can serve two masters."

a. The slave was the living tool of his master.

b. He could be beaten, sold, expelled, or even killed by his master.

c. His time was not his own, for he was at his master's disposal every moment.

- Jesus said a Christian can't serve a master like that while serving God.

- And mammon or wealth can be a harsh, cruel master.

B. "Mammon" (KJV, NKJV), or "wealth" (NASU) comes from a word that means "to entrust."

1. It describes the money entrusted to someone for safekeeping.

2. As you built up a large sum of money, the idea was that you would begin to trust it.

3. So this word came to denote something IN which you place your trust.

4. Well, God cannot be the master of one's life, when that life is already controlled by something else.

Hebrews 13:5-6

5 ***Make sure that your character is free from the love of money***, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," 6 so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?"

## CLOSING

- A. Former astronaut & U.S. senator John Glenn was the first American to orbit the earth.

He made this observation: "Is the ultimate objective of America nothing more than the physical improvement of our situation?"

Less work & better living.

What is our purpose in the world?

It seems to me that in the past we seemed to have a national purpose, something we were driving toward.

All at once, in our day & time, we no longer see where we are going."

Then he added: "It seems to me there has to be something better than just finer automobiles & bigger houses. . . ."

1. Mr. Glenn may not have known the answer to that question, but we certainly do.

Colossians 3:1-4

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, ***keep seeking the things above***, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **2 *Set your mind on the things above***, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died & your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.