

# The Placement of our Hearts – We Get to Choose

John Knox Presbyterian Church, 109 SW Normandy Road, Seattle, Washington 98166

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Lent II

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## Matthew 6:19-24/Luke 12:22-34

**Matthew** <sup>19</sup> “Do not **store up** for yourselves **treasures on earth**, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But **store up** for yourselves **treasures in heaven**, where moths and vermin do not destroy, 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 eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup> But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

<sup>24</sup> “No one can **serve** two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot **serve** both God and money.

**Luke** <sup>22</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples: “Therefore I tell you, **do not worry** about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. <sup>23</sup> For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. <sup>24</sup> **Consider** the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! <sup>25</sup> Who of you by **worrying** can add a single hour to your life. <sup>26</sup> Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you **worry** about the rest?

<sup>27</sup> “**Consider** how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. <sup>28</sup> If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! <sup>29</sup> And **do not set** your **heart** on what you will eat or drink; **do not worry** about it. <sup>30</sup> For the pagan world **runs** after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. <sup>31</sup> **But seek his kingdom**, and these things will be given to you as well.

<sup>32</sup> “**Do not be afraid**, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> **Sell** your possessions and **give** to the poor. **Provide** purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a **treasure in heaven** that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your **treasure** is, there your **heart** will be also.

## Memory Verse: Matthew 6:21

*“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

Q: What are the themes of these scripture portions?

1. **Action verbs** – we get to choose how we live
2. **Content nouns** – we get to choose who we are (the contents of our heart/core/person)
3. The question: How then should we live in the world?

### **PLACEMENT VERBS (where we place, locate our hearts, our inner self, our core person)**

Negative – to be avoided – do not store up; do not worry; do not set; do not be afraid

Positive – to be embraced – store up; consider; seek; sell; give; provide

### **CONTENT NOUNS (what we fill our hearts with, our inner self, our core person)**

Negative – to be avoided (not to be our focus) – treasures on earth; money; food; clothes

Positive – to be embraced – treasures in heaven; God’s kingdom (here and now and in heaven)

## Treasures

Treasure - noun = thesaurus = place where something is kept, usually something of great value  
Store up – verb = thesaurizo = to store up, to save, to treasure

Question: How then should we live in the world? Two equally important mandates:

**(1) “Sell your possessions and give to the poor.**

**(2) “ Provide purses for yourselves that will never wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail,...”**

So what does this all mean:

- For our own lives? (**provide** – spiritual treasure, now and in heaven)
- As we relate to the world around us? (**sell, give** – fleshing out the Gospel in the world)
- What in these teachings of Jesus appeals to those who don’t know Him?

Here’s the conclusion of the matter: <sup>24</sup> *“No one can **serve** two masters.”*

“You’re gonna have to **serve** somebody, yes indeed, you’re gonna have to **serve** somebody  
Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord, but you’re gonna have to **serve** somebody.”

Bob Dylan “Gotta Serve Somebody” © 1979

*“Where thy **heart** is, there shall thy **treasure** be also.’* Our **treasure** may of course be small and inconspicuous, but its size is immaterial; it all depends on the **heart**, on ourselves. And if we ask how we know where our **hearts** are, the answer is just as simple – everything which hinders us from loving God above all things and acts as a barrier between ourselves and our obedience to Jesus is our **treasure**, and the place where our **heart** is.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1906-1945, The Cost of Discipleship, writing on Matthew 6:21

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my **heart**;  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art  
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.  
Riches I heed not, nor man’s empty praise,  
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:  
Thou and Thou only, first in my **heart**,  
High King of Heaven, my **Treasure** Thou art.  
High King of Heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach Heaven’s joys, O bright Heaven’s Sun!  
**Heart** of my own **heart**, whatever befall,  
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

**Unison Prayer** – Book of Common Prayer

Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that as we believe your only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into heaven, so we may also in **heart** and mind there ascend and with him continually dwell; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

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