**Calvary Fellowship 6.5.2022 Matthew 6:19-24 “Treasure Map”**

* **Having a 3rd child is so different from having your 1st - when U bring your 1st, you’re freaking out about everything**
* Everything has to be sterilized, nothing can touch the floor, every person who holds your baby has to go through a 12-point background check
* But then U loosen up as U have more kids - I learned this when I noticed my reaction to the exact same situation - cereal falling on the floor
* When Mia was little & spilled a bowl of cereal, I jumped out of my seat & said, “Don’t worry mama. I’ll clean this up & make U a new bowl.”
* When Xander was born & he spilled a bowl of cereal - I got up & said, “Ok buddy, let’s clean this up together & get U a new bowl of cereal.”
* When Livi was born & she spilled her bowl of cereal, I said, “Livi, your cereal is on the floor. Come eat it."
* **It’s true in taking pictures - I have literally 1 million pictures of Mia**
* Her entire life is documented in pictures of her doing everything imaginable
* Xander had about 1/2 as many pictures - we captured the important stuff, but definitely not as many as Mia
* And Livi, that poor girl came into my office 1 day & looked around & said, “Dad, there isn’t 1 picture of me in this office”
* So I quickly threw out a picture of 1 of the other kids & put 1 of Livi in its place
* **This can happen w/ anything - we start out intense, but then we can start to coast, forgetting that good things don’t happen w/o being intentional**
* It’s true in your marriage & we know that - that’s why we start our intentional & passionate & we go the extra w/o being asked
* **When my wife & I were dating, she was in college in Tallahassee**
* She called me & told me that she had pneumonia - so I got in my car & I drove 450 miles each way to bring her home - That’s love
* The problem is, about a year after we got married, we were going to sleep & she asked if I could get her a glass of water
* U would have thought she had just asked me for 1 my kidneys
* I laid in bed & thought, “That’s mess up. I was willing to drive 900 miles for her a year ago & now 9 feet is getting me belt out of shape
* **Something happened - passion turned into function & that can happen in any relationship, including our relationship w/ God**
* So the question is, how do I know if it’s happening? How do I know if my commitment is deepening or I’m becoming more selfish?
* Jesus is going show us the test we can take to see where we’re headed
* **So we’re in this series called, “The Story ” & we working our way through the Gospel Matthew chapter by chapter**
* **And right now we’re looking at Jesus’ more famous sermon, the sermon on the mount & Jesus has been laying out how His followers should live**
* He talked about being happy - then he talks about happy people influencing the world like salt & light - then he talks about living higher than the law requires
* Then He got into our spiritual disciplines & the motivations behind them
* It’s about doing the right things for the right reasons b/c it’s so easy to try to live a fake life & live for the approval of others - which will make U miserable
* And now Jesus is going to show us how to know what direction our lives are moving in - are we becoming more self less or more selfish?
* **And Jesus is going to show us that if U will be intentional & not allow yourself to more from passion to function, you’ll be the best life possible**
* It will focus your life & allow U to create the kind of future & live the kind of future that’s worth living
* So Jesus is going take 1 area of life & focus in on it - truth be told, Jesus could have talk about any area of life b/c the principles are the same
* He could have used relationships, career, family, health, or spiritual maturity
* Instead, Jesus uses something that we’re so sensitive about, so protective of, so focused on, that we will never forget what He’s saying to us
* Listen - your future is influenced by what U do & the decisions U make w/ this
* Your family is influenced by what U do & the decisions U make w/ this
* Our church is influenced by what U do & the decisions U make w/ this…

**———(v. 19-21)———**

**#1 - My Heart Moves in the Direction of Where I Invest**

* **I need to begin by telling about a guy named Larry Gartrell**
* He was my 12th grade economics teacher& is the only person I know that is banned from Disney World – How?
* He got smoked weed w/ few students on Grad Night & fell asleep on lawn of Haunted Mansion - apparently, Disney frowns on that kind of behavior
* I knew about him before my Senior year b/c my friend Al Brown had a brother named Michael & Michael had Mr. Gartrell for economics last period
* Well, the bell rang at the end of the school day & Mr. Gartrell was in his office that was connected to the classroom - well, everyone left - except Michael
* When Mr. Gartrell cam back, he saw Michael there, he said, “Michael, b/c U waited for me & didn’t leave before I dismissed the class. I’m awarding U 1 million points for my class. So forget all the assignments & the final exam. U are guaranteed to get an A in my class.”
* Well, Mr. Gartrell wanted to teach us about the stock market & he thought the best way for us to learn about the stock market was to starting investing
* **So he gave all of us 200 imaginary dollars - but here was the catch:**
* Every $ we earned above 200 was a point towards our final grade & every dollar we lost from the original $200 was taken away from our final grade
* I saw this as a great opportunity b/c I was failing his class & this was my only hope to passing economics & not taking it in summer school
* So after talking to a friend, I invested my $200 into some stock
* But what happened to me was something I didn’t expect or understand until I became a Christian - what happened to me?
* I started reading the paper every day – Not just me, my entire class
* We were all walking around w/ copies of the Wall Street Journal
* We were obsessed w/ where our money was going
* **And b/c I know U want to know, I did pass Economics b/c I made ton of imaginary money in the stock market**
* But I figured something out before the day we had to do our presentation - I had never told Mr. Gartrell what stocks I was investing in
* So my friend Rob & I got the newspaper from the 1st day the assignment was given & then we had the newspaper from the last day & we found the stocks that did the best over that period & we said invested in those stocks
* So I made thousands of imaginary dollars on that assignment & I did really have to worry about that class anymore
* My wife knows this story & says, “If U weren’t a Christian, U would be in jail.”
* I said, “Yeah, but I’d probably be running the jail, so there’s something.”
* **But something happened in my life when I invested my $ somewhere – my heart followed - I became obsessed w/ how it was doing**
* This is true w/ everything in life - Jesus talks about possessions & where we put our resources & possessions is where our heart will follow
* Now U know this is to be the case b/c you’ve lived on planet earth for a while
* We always invest in the things that matter to us & when we start investing in things, they start mattering to us even more
* Jesus is encouraging us to focus on eternity & when we do, our heart will naturally move in that direction
* And why is this important? B/c when U lay up treasure in heaven, U will begin to care about the things of heaven more
* And that’s not just true w/ money & possessions - but it starts there
* U start giving & something will happen to every other area of your life - all of your life will all start moving in that direction towards eternal things
* So what would your marriage look like if U cared about eternal things more than earthy things? Do U think your marriage would be better or worse?
* Would your relationship w/ your kids be better or worse?
* Would U have more joy in your life or less? And why is that?
* B/c when U decided that eternal things were more important, it changed something in U - U decided that God’s way was better than your own way
* And that begins to change everything - that’s why Jesus says, “Where your treasure this, there you heart will be also”
* Your money & your stuff is the shortest line to your heart - U might not like that
* I might not like that b/c we think we’re more sophisticated than that, but we aren’t & Jesus knows that & wants us to know it too
* If U want to know what matters to U most, follow the money
* And if U want something else to matter most, then change the flow of the money & your heart can’t help but follow…

**———(v. 22-23)———**

**#2 - My Vision can Enlarge My World**

* **This is a hard passage to understand b/c it’s a Jewish idiom**
* Every culture has their expressions that don’t made sense to others
* Whenever I try to explain Cuban expressions to my non-Hispanic friends, they look at me like I’m insane
* In Spanish, if U think someone is lying to U, U call it “Un Paquete?” - Translate that & you’re saying, “You’re story is “a package”?
* “Eres un reventao” = “You’re having good luck” or “you’re exploding”
* So what is Jesus saying? He’s say that a good eye brings light to the whole body & a bad eye keeps a body in darkness
* “A man with an evil eye hastens after riches, and does not consider that poverty will come upon him.” (Proverbs 28:22)
* “He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor.” (Proverbs 22:9)
* The word translated “generous” here is the Hebrew word “tov”, the same word that’s used in Genesis when God create everything & called it “good”
* Jesus is saying that generosity brings light to your whole body b/c it allows the rest of the body to move freely
* God has a way of blessing people who are generous & He has a way of bringing better opportunities, divine connections, & a larger future
* “The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller. The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped.” (Proverbs 11:24-25)
* That is a reality of spiritual life - U don’t have to take my word for it, ask anyone who is generous & they will tell U the moment they brought God into their financial world, it got larger
* **When Carey was in college in Tallahassee, I went to visit her**
* Before leaving town, I got my paycheck & my tithe was $53 – In was in college & not making much money & I needed the money for my trip
* I prayed, ‘Lord, let’s not worry about the $53. What’s $53 to U? For me, it’s gas.’
* My car had just come out of the shop & I drove up to Tallahassee & on 1st day it died – the battery was bad – Went to Auto store - It was $53 on the nose
* **We want to bless us financially, but that doesn’t happen until we invite Him into our finances by honoring Him w/ the tithe**
* “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-7)
* Here’s hat we need to remember: we don’t simply reap what we sow - we always reap more than we sow
* “They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.” (Hosea 8:7)
* U sow into the kingdom of God & honor God w/ your finances, guess what?
* God will honor U - but God blesses us far beyond what we could ever do for ourselves in our own power
* Listen carefully - I’m not talking about a “get rich quick” thing - I’m not saying that U give God $1,000 & He’ll give U $100,000
* What I am saying is this - if U honor God & give to Him cheerfully b/c He saved U, b/c He changed your life, b/c we owe Him everything anyway
* Then when we give willingly & cheerfully, He blesses us beyond our imagination

**———(v. 24)———**

**#3 - My Loyalty is Revealed in My Commitments**

* **So I read the strangest article about Halloween a few months ago**
* It said that in 2021, people spent 1/2 a billion dollars on Halloween costumes… for their pets - I’m sorry, but you’re barking up the wrong tree
* The problem isn’t lack of money - it’s priorities about the resources we have
* **Here’s what Jesus does, He contrasts the idea of serving God w/ our possessions or serving Mammon - who is Mammon?**
* Mammon was a deity that was essentially the personification of wealth
* And Jesus is saying that what we do with & our attitude towards money is what will impact us more than we realize
* It’s not if we’re going to serve a god, it’s which god are we going to serve
* And our actions are leading towards God or towards Mammon
* **B/c we have no problem spending money on the things we love**
* I can spend money on guitar stuff w/o thought of the future or that my kids need to go to college or that they need to eat tomorrow
* **So my birthday is in October & some friends got together & bought me a new guitar - it’s amazing - it’s still in shock**
* In fact, someone bought me a guitar last year as well - my son said to me, “Dad, you’ve gotten a new guitar 2 years in a row. How do U feel?”
* I said, “Xander, I feel very excited about next year.”
* Well, whenever I talk about something I like, people buy it for me - if I say I love Nerds, a giant box of Nerds shows up the next week
* 1 time someone bought be a 3 month subscription of Oreo boxes
* So I have this joke that from now on, I’m only going to talk about Bitcoin & see what happens - well, a friend of mine bought me bitcoin for my birthday
* My son said, “Dad, how many Bitcoins do U own?” - Well, I don’t own a whole Bitcoin - I own .0000000875 of 1 Bitcoin - but I’m in the game
* But here’s what’s happened to me - I check the price of Bitcoin every day
* I follow a YouTube channel that talks about Bitcoin & Crypto-currency - all b/c someone put treasure there w/ my name of it - my heart instinctively followed
* And this is a fact of life - whatever U want your heart to follow - put resources there & your heart can’t help but move in that direction
* And when U put your money to do good as U invest in the Kingdom of God, your heart can’t help but follow & are about the things of the Kingdom
* B/c we can’t serve God & money - we have to decide who we’re going to serve
* B/c we will either trust God & use money or we’ll trust money & use God
* Jesus is saying that it’s 1 or the the other - it’s impossible to sit on the fence
* **B/c here’s the reality that Jesus wants us to embrace:**
* If U set your heart on money & give your heart to money, you’ll always feel poor
* If U set your heart on beauty & give your heart to beauty, you’ll always feel ugly
* If U set your heart on power & give your heart to power, you’ll always feel weak
* But if U set your heart on Jesus & give your heart to Him & walk closer w/ Him, you’ll get Jesus & all the other things thrown in
* C.S. Lewis said, “If U aim for earth you’ll miss it, but if U aim for heaven, you’ll get earth thrown in”
* When U make God your treasure, you’ll find that God has already made U His treasure - that’s why He came to earth
* B/c He already had power & beauty & honor - And He left it b/c He saw U as His treasure - and when U make God your treasure, your life is never the same
* **Here’s where the rubber meets the road - I want to challenge U to do 1 of 2 things - maybe you’ll do both, but U need to at least do 1**
* First, sign up for FPU - U need to get educated about money
* Most of us got zero education about money growing up & our current financial situation reveals that - This is a financial education from A-Z
* Here’s what I’m asking U - don’t be proud - proud don’t learn anything
* They think they know everything & they never grow - people who grow are those who are curious - sign up & come to the first class
* We took this lesson from narcotics salesmen - the 1st one’s free - go w/ your spouse & you’ll be certain yourself up for a better life for U & your family
* **Second, start trusting God by giving Him the tithe for the next 90 days**
* We call it the 90-day tithe challenge - it’s where U commit to giving God the 1st 10% & U trust Him to bless the 90% & do more than the 100% could do
* I can tell U w/ full confidence the people who have taken this challenge & followed through have never regretted it & never stopped tithing
* **On your CC, there’s a box that says “Take the 90 day tithe challenge” - if U want to experience God’s blessing, check it & take the challenge**
* Here’s the deal we’re making - U are committing to tithe for 90 days & U promise to send me an email telling me what God does
* **But I want to partner w/ U - so if U decide to take the tithe challenge, I want to send U a book that really helped me in the area of giving**
* It’s called “Fields of Gold” & it is a book that I have read multiple times b/c it explains this concept of tithing so well
* **Let me challenge U to take it 1 step further - grab your offering envelope**
* U can sign up to do this automatically so U don’t forget
* That’s what I do b/c I’d rather forget that I obeyed God, rather than forget to obey - That way, even if I go out of town, I can still give & be faithful to God
* B/c here’s the bottom line - where my treasure is, that’s where my heart is
* **So if you’ve been giving nothing, it’s time to start obeying God & living w/ greater commitment than the unbeliever who doesn’t even know God**
* If you’ve been giving something, but not tithing - it’s time to give God more than we give the cable company
* Listen - I wish I could take this step for U - but the reality is, U have to take the step yourself & choose to trust God for yourself
* I love to bless my kids & when their behavior doesn’t allow me to bless them, the person who is most bummed out is me
* The same thing is true w/ your Heavenly Father - He loves U & wants to bless U
* And when U trust God in tithing, you’re going to find what so many of us have found - that God was waiting for us like a loving Father
* That He’s ready to bless & do for us greater things that we could ever do for ourselves…