

“Have I Got an Investment for You!”

Matthew 6:19-24

Intro. – It wasn’t that long ago in our nation’s history we were involved with a war that killed more Americans than WW 1 & 2 combined. It was the Civil War. I want you to imagine yourself living in the South during this dark time of history. I also want you to imagine that you knew for a fact the North was going to win the war very soon. It meant at the end of the war, Confederate currency was going to be worthless. Now, if you were wise, you would have cashed in your Confederate money for US currency. Why? This would be the only currency having any value once the war was over.

Let me use this to illustrate the following. Christians have “insider information” on the coming worldwide change in social and economic matters. The present day currency (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, even land) will be worthless when we die or Christ comes back – both of which may be closer than we want to admit. With this “knowledge” our investment strategy should be radically affected. For you and me to accumulate vast, earthly treasures in face of the inevitable future, such would be equal to stockpiling Confederate money knowing its ultimate worthlessness. Yet, today where is the emphasis, concern, and heart’s focus so often in so many lives? Such truly betrays one’s stated allegiance to God and His Word the Bible!

It’s kind of like the guy who went to a psychiatrist. After their first session the doctor said, “That will be \$500.” The patient responded, “\$500! All the others only charge \$100.” The doctor replied, “It’s part of my treatment. It will help you to attach less importance on money and material things.”

Presently, you and I have access to numerous financial advisors, many of whom claim to be able to counsel us in investments that are the best. How many of us haven’t heard the phrase: “Have I got an investment for you!”? This is exactly what our Lord is saying in our text.

Purpose: to reaffirm our need to invest in the eternal

John Tillotson: “He who provides for this life but takes no care for eternity is wise for the moment but a fool forever.” Jesus said it better: “*Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth... But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... for where you treasure is, there will your heart be also.*” The following are three wise investments for eternity:

I INVEST IN THOSE WHO NEED

A. The Bible Makes Provision for the Needy

1. O.T. farmers instructed to be sensitive to poor at harvest... leaving grain so needy could gather...
 - a. Deuteronomy 15:7-8 “*If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward your poor brother. Rather be openhanded and freely lend him whatever he needs.*”
 - b. Proverbs 19:17 “*He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord...*”
2. N.T. references
 - a. Matthew 25:37-40 “*Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’*”
 - b. Acts 4:34-35 “*There was no needy persons among them...and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.*”
 - c. 1 John 3:17 “*If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?*”

B. The Bible Makes It Most Clear

1. Those with resources are to help those without – i.e. it is wrong to have abundant and ignore needs of those about us, conversely, God will honor concern/awareness towards those genuinely in need.
2. But there are so many in need, how are we to determine whom to help?
 - a. 1 John 4:1 “*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*”
 - b. 4 questions to ask:

- 1) is this person/organization genuinely in need? – note we are instructed to care for genuine needs and not wants...
- 2) is this person willing to work? 2 Thessalonians 3:10 *“For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: ‘If a man will not work, he shall not eat.’”*
- 3) will money be used to meet intended need? – e.g. smell of smoke, alcohol etc...
- 4) is the cause worthy of support – e.g. B. Russell found gave to Planned Parenthood... thought giving to organization rid crippling disease; instead, giving org. eliminates babies

We are to “be wise as serpents and harmless as doves” in our investments!

II INVEST IN YOUR KIDS

- many parents leave “kids” inheritance when they what? DIE!
 - good to provide for loved ones... Jesus did for His mother, but we usually overdo this inheritance thing
 - inheritances often make for tense times – e.g. estate taxes, lawyers’ fees (eating a sizeable amount...) then siblings can’t agree, jealousy etc... seldom kids appreciate as their parents hoped...
 - point in all of this – perhaps the time to give to our kids is when they are younger:
- A. It Truly Benefits Them at this Time
 1. Wait till you’re 70, 80, 90, your kids will be 50’s 60’s
 2. Greater need when they are younger: 96% 1st time house buyers need financial assistance...
 - Illus. – folks gave 6 of us kids \$1,000 @, after selling house Michigan... don’t remember the particulars, but, do remember it came at a great time in our lives.
 - B. It Can be Enjoyed Together
 1. When parents give while everyone is younger, you enjoy seeing your kids benefit from generosity
 2. Conversely, refuse to be generous while alive, might wonder if kids happier if checked out earlier:
 - a. Illus. – like little boy kept asking his Grandpa to make the noise of a frog. “Why do you want me to sound like a frog?” “I overheard Mom say when you crock, we’ll be rich.”
 - b. Illus. – remember that story my folks giving us \$1,000. “Your mother and I had great joy in giving that to you kids.” – We had great joy in receiving it too!
 - C. It Has Solid Tax Benefits
 1. Matthew 22:21 *“...render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things God’s.”*
 - Illus. – “People are finding it increasingly difficult to support both the government and family on their salary.”
 2. Most estates are taxed to the hilt... are you aware there are ethical/legal means reducing taxes?
 3. There are Xtians available who can educate and inform us better on this the use of God’s funds...
 - D. It is a Great Tool by Which to Teach
 1. Deuteronomy 11:18-19 *“Fix these words of mine in your hearts and mind... Teach them to your children.”*
 2. It’s out responsibility/privilege to educate our kids on God’s principles = being good stewards of \$
 3. Obviously, many young people not being taught... great need/opportunity to invest in our kids!

III INVEST IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

- A. The Best Investment You Can Make (i.e. what is your “cash-cow”?)
 1. Mission minded church... “more blessed to give than to receive”... e.g. this church...
 2. You don’t have to feel guilty when people call/ask for donations... You’re not doing nothing if you are giving through the local church... I’m looking at a list of missions we support...
 3. This local church funds are used for the Lord’s work and very conscientiously so if I may say...
- B. How Much Should You Give?
 1. OT = tithe (1/10th) considered belonging to God and not a gift – Malachi 3:8-10 says Jews were “stealing” from God if not tithing... *“Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, ‘How do*

we rob you?’ In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse – the whole nation of you – because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”

2. NT = standard for giving is GRACE – 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 “...he who sows sparingly, reaps spar..
3. Three principles in giving:
 - a. give generously – note: if tithe minimum under OT, certainly no less for us live under grace!
 - b. give willfully – Illus. – Bob Hope and Jack Benny in car together at toll booth. Hope asked Benny for dollar. Benny reluctantly handed him a 20 saying, “I don’t have any ones!” Hope handed the 20 to operator and said, “Keep the change!” Benny about had a fit...
 - c. give cheerfully = God loves a cheerful giver = gift that blesses both giver and recipient!

Telling you, local church is your wisest investment!

Conclusion: Track coach to pole-vaulter: “Son, throw your heart over the bar and the rest of you will follow.”

This is what God meant when He said, “...where your treasure is there will your heart be also.” Throw your heart into eternal matters and the rest of you will follow!

Illus. – Story told of a wealthy man who begged God to let him take money with him when he died. Lord finally agreed but clarified it by saying he could bring only one sack. Man immediately liquidated his assets to gold. When died, stood before Peter... “There’s a guy here says You gave him permission to bring one sack with him to heaven. For the life of me, I can’t figure out why he’d want to bring pavement with him.”

I can give you several solid reasons why you ought to give away your earthly goods and invest in eternal matters. The most compelling reason is that earthly goods are God’s to begin with and they can be used for eternal matters and not just earthly matters... Have I Got an Investment for You!