



[Matthew 6:19-21](#)

(19) Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: (20) But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: (21) For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

King James Version

There is an over-arching subject that [Jesus](#) never directly mentions in the context of [Matthew 6:19-21](#), but He was undoubtedly concerned about it. No one ever had a clearer understanding of human realities than Jesus. This subject concerns two levels of diversion from what is proper within achieving a desire, the first being minor compared to the second.

First, then, is that, humanly, we can become so deeply involved in achieving an especially desired goal that we become inattentive to virtually everything else, including [God](#). Some refer to it as “losing oneself in the moment.” We can be thankful that these kinds of diversions generally do not last long. We usually “catch” ourselves within them and redirect our efforts accordingly. How many serious accidents have been caused by this type of distraction is beyond knowing.

The second concern is far more damaging to our calling: We allow our human nature to re-enslave us to this world. This return to carnality happens when we fail to discipline ourselves daily. We fail to maintain our focus on the absolute fact that what really matters in our lives are glorifying God and attaining spiritual value in our character. We must put everything else in second, third, or fourth place in order of importance. No one can do this for us; we must do it ourselves.

Solomon writes in [Ecclesiastes 9:10](#), “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.” His counsel, valuable within its context, applies in spades to our calling. The context does not delve into the fact that not all things a person desires and works for are of equal value. Herein lies another reality that we must resolve because heavenly treasure and earthly treasure are not equally important, especially after God calls us.

The proper balance of the time and effort we give to seeking treasure must be an important companion to determining our priorities in what treasures we seek. Once God calls a person, a new effort with far greater, more important goals has entered his life. The called-out individual must never allow himself to forget that the Creator God personally and specifically called him; he is not among the elect by accident or stroke of luck.

We must add to this astounding truth what Jesus says in [Matthew 6:33](#) to those God calls: “Seek first the [kingdom of God](#) and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” This burning dedication to the same goals that God has called us to must accompany the called-out person's efforts to be a profitable servant. Without this characteristic, we can be quite busy accomplishing, but unless we are also deeply committed to what God is focused on for us to achieve, we will merely burn time without achieving much of value in terms of God's spiritual purpose.

God wants us to give our time and life purposefully over to attaining His Kingdom. Merely being busy and productive are not the only issues. Being focused on what God assigns works hand in glove with what one's treasure is. [Matthew 6:24](#), just a few verses later, gives us a significant reason why: “No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

The reason may escape the reasoning of many, but Jesus clearly warns that giving our lives over to the achievement of the things of this world is blatant idolatry for a Christian! Do we truly want to place ourselves in the position of hating God—or even loving Him less than something else? The things of this world are those things God has not assigned to the Christian life.

Unlike those in [the world](#), few called-out ones fall into such calamity, but some do and find themselves re-enslaved to the world by it. Such a person will be so preoccupied with gathering his worldly treasure that his skewed focus will confuse his values. His achievement in that area of life will obscure the goal God has established for our spiritual existence. The human heart will follow the carnal influence rather than the godly one. We must make diligent efforts to avoid this trap because the world acts like a magnet, always trying to recapture what has been pulled from it.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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