

Introduction:

1. I wonder what Jesus meant when He said what He did in Matthew 6:22-23?
 - a. While I understand the difference between a bad eye and a good eye, how can it be said that the “eye is the lamp of the body”? A lamp is a source of light. The eye sees the light that the lamp produces, but the human eye itself is not a source of light.
 - b. The answer is that Jesus is speaking figuratively. He does not literally mean that the eye is the source of light for our body, but that it is the light-bringer. It is the apparatus that lets light into the body; it is the guide upon which the whole body depends. The eye makes the rest of the body aware of its environment; dangers are detected, duties are done, direction and decisions are all influenced by the eye. If the eye cannot see, then the body stumbles and falls.
 - c. So, in a secondary sense, the eye can be called the lamp of the body because it provides light to the body so it can properly function. The eye makes it possible for us to use light for our benefit.
2. But, Jesus’ lesson is not about the eye. The eye is but a metaphor in this text. It is about the singleness of our lives. It is about singularity of focus and goal within our lives, our aim in life.
 - a. In the context Jesus talks about heaven, Matthew 6:19-21. I conclude from this that Jesus’ words in verses 22-23 may have something to do with heaven.
 - b. I am persuaded that Jesus is talking about our spiritual vision. What do we really see in life? What is our goal? What are we focused on? How good or bad are your eyes?
 - c. Looking again at the context, Jesus uses the heart to raise a similar question in our minds in verse 21. Like the eye of verse 22, the “heart” in this text is not the literal heart that beats within us; rather it is the mind, the affections and desires. Jesus says our hearts should focus on heaven; we lay treasure there.

The Lesson:**I. What is our life about?**

- A. That question could be asked in several ways.
 1. Who are we trying to please? Is it God or self, or someone else?
 2. Who do we serve? Do we serve material things? Have they become our master?
 3. What do we really value in life? It is God that we hold dear? Or is it things?
 4. What are we really devoted to? And in what is our trust? Our coins say, “In God we trust,” but for many Americans it is, “In coin we trust.” Has gold become our God?
- B. We must have unlimited trust in our God. That’s what the whole context of our text is about.

II. Treasure in heaven, Matthew 6:19-21.

- A. Jesus first gives a negative command—a “don’t do this.”
 1. Jesus does not forbid us to have treasure on earth. The statement is elliptical (emphasizing one over another). His intent is to show what must be the primary goal of our lives.
 2. It would be absurd for the Bible to say that we can have no possessions on earth and then it turns around and tells us to make provision for ourselves, Proverbs 6:6-8; 2 Corinthians 12:14b; 1 Timothy 5:8. Men of faith were sometimes rich; Jesus does not condemn them for storing up wealth. See Genesis 13:2; Luke 19:2, 9; Matthew 27:57.
 3. Yet, wealth, by its very nature, is dangerous. While treasure can be a great blessing, it can also be a great snare. Consider the fact that many people in the Bible lost their souls over money, Mark 14:11; Acts 5:4; Acts 8:18-20.
 4. If a person’s real treasure (his ultimate aim in life) is about gaining things on this earth—whether it is money, power, prestige, fame, popularity—he is a poor man indeed. Whatever you put at the center of your life—your heart, your eye—will be absorbed in that.
 5. That’s why our passions must not be directed to anything that is merely earthly in nature.
 6. No matter how wonderful things on this earth might be, they are all temporary and can be lost in a moment. Look at the things people worry about, Matthew 6:25ff. Clothes become moth-eaten; bread becomes moldy; fields become weed infested; silver tarnishes; houses fall down (or can be eaten by termites or destroyed by a hurricane). Protect it all; try to keep it new and a thief may break in and steal, or it may burn in a fire. It is all temporary.

- B. Following the negative command, Jesus gives a positive command—a “do this.”
1. While we don’t make amassing treasure on earth the primary goal of our lives, we do make heaven our goal: Matthew 6:20. Why is treasure in heaven so much more valuable?
 - a. It leads to a life (blessing) that will never end, John 10:28.
 - b. It gives us access to a well that never runs dry, John 4:13-14.
 - c. It is part of building a foundation that will never be destroyed, 2 Timothy 2:19.
 - d. It leads to a love that is real and will never fade away, Romans 8:39.
 - e. It provides an inheritance that will never be lost, 1 Peter 1:4-5.
 2. Heavenly treasure is far more valuable than earthly treasure. If we could but spend five minutes in heaven and then come back to earth, how would we view our treasures?
 - a. One of the great blessings that heaven provides is the appreciation of heaven while we are yet on the earth. Can we appreciate heaven—enough to lay up treasure there? Are our eyes healthy enough to see the glory that awaits us?
 - b. Jesus says we cannot keep the stuff we gain here on earth. That’s why we use what we have to put treasure in a secure place in heaven. “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”
 - c. Whatever we lay up in heaven is mothproof, rustproof, burglar-proof, fireproof, recession-proof and inflation-proof!
 - d. One man said, “I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God’s hands, that I still possess”
- C. “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,” Matthew 6:21.

III. **The lamp of the body is the eye, Matthew 6:22-23.**

- A. We now come full circle and return to our starting point. Just as in the heart and treasure verses Jesus talked about our ultimate ambition in life, so He does in these verses as He talks about the eye. What are our eyes focused on? Piling up earthly treasure can blur our vision.
1. If our vision is blurred, then we stumble; we cannot see what we are doing! The eye has to see clearly in order to guide us. Keep your eyes on the prize!
 2. An eye that is diseased by glaucoma, cataract or myopia cannot see clearly. An eye that has a foreign object either on or in the lens cannot see clearly, if at all. At best, everything is blurred. How is your vision?
- B. Just as you have natural eyes to light your environment and allow you to see the physical world, you also have spiritual eyes—a mind to illuminate and brighten your whole life, to guide you morally and spiritually.
1. If your aim in life is high and noble—seeking God’s kingdom—then everything in your life will be brightened and ennobled (verse 22). You will see everything in light of your aim and destiny. Heaven will influence every word and every deed and decision.
 2. But what if the light within is darkened by the things of this world? What if sin has blocked the vision? Jesus exclaimed, “How great is that darkness!” It is so great that the person misses everything. That which he should have seen and which should have been his goal in life is lost—and so is he. How great is that darkness—and how great is the deception! For the man without Jesus think he knows and sees everything! What deception. His life is filled with such darkness that he thinks the followers of Jesus are blind!
 3. According to Jesus, the only ones who truly see are those with their eyes on the prize!

Conclusion:

1. Remember that Jesus’ lesson is not literally about the eye. The eye is but a metaphor in this text. It is about the singleness of our lives. It is about singularity of focus and goal within our lives.
 - a. Ultimately, every man is single in his purpose and intent in life, Matthew 6:24. This is a man with double vision. Any man, for a while, may appear to be able to serve two masters. But, ultimately he will choose one over the other.
 - b. “But what if a man never makes the choice between the two?” Then he has made his choice. It is a choice not to allow God as his single master. He made a bad choice.
2. People with double vision don’t survive in the kingdom of God. God won’t let you have double vision. He calls for a decision. To choose not to decide (as some think they can do) is to choose not to serve God. What will you serve?