**THE HU$TLE IS OVER**

**Part 3 of 6**

**He’s King…And He’s Worthy**

**Matthew 6:19-24**

You’re probably familiar with the shell game. You know, the one where a con artist on the street cheats you out of your money by moving the shells around while you’re trying to keep track of which shell has the ball under it. You think you have it figured out, but when the shell is lifted up, the ball is gone—AND SO IS YOUR MONEY!

Sometimes dealing with personal finances feels like that. We feel hustled—by trying to keep up with bills, expenses, taxes, even the Joneses! And it seems like the more we hustle to try to keep up, the more we get hustled! But there’s good news, God has a plan for your financial freedom! The hustle is over!

Grace will take you places hustling can’t!

For the past two weekends, we’ve been hanging out in Luke chapter 12…and today we’re going to look at another place where Jesus talks about the subject of money – found in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 6.

So, for the past two weekends, we’ve seen that when it comes to money, He Owns It…and we simply USE it. That was the emphasis in Week #1. And then last weekend, we saw that “He’s Faithful, so we don’t need to worry! “If you missed any of this series check it out at calvarychurch.cc or the Calvary APP.

You know…having been around church much of my life – I’ve made some observations along the way. And I’ve noticed that when it comes to money, there’s a lot of junk out there being promoted as though its Christian, when it’s really not.

And I’ve noticed that there are a couple of persistent schools of thought that we really should avoid like the coronavirus as Christians – even though they’re often presented as biblical. And the first is what I’d call…

1. **POVERTY theology**

And poverty theology mistakenly teaches that Christians should have a deep disdain for material possessions. Poverty theology says that if you want to be *really* spiritual, you’ve gotta literally sell all you have and give it to the poor – and take a vow of poverty as a way to affirm your undistracted allegiance to Jesus.

This kind of theology can *sound* very Biblical. It’s trust, most of the early Christians were poor – but that wasn’t because they were Christians. That was because MOST people were poor across the board, and as persecution increased in the Roman empire, it became even *more* difficult for Christians to make a living.

But when we read through the NT, we see that there’s plenty of encouragement and instruction for people who are rich, AS WELL AS for those who are poor. So, poverty theology isn’t Biblical. Being poor is NOT some automatic sign of real devotion to Christ.

There’s a second type of bad theology – what we might call…

1. **PROSPERITY theology**

And prosperity theology is much more rampant than poverty theology. Prosperity theology says that God wants every Christian to be “healthy and wealthy.” And this theology implies that if you aren’t these things, then there may be something wrong with your relationship with God or something wrong with your faith.

Some of these groups actually go so far as to say that being poor is evidence that a person isn’t truly a child of God – or may be hiding some great secret “sin”. Now, this is absolutely ridiculous – and it’s a lie that’s been around since the days of Job. If you know the story of the Book of Job, his so-called friends make these ridiculous suggestions – that the reason for Job’s sufferings were linked to some secret sin he was hiding.

Prosperity theology is running rampant across the continents of Africa and Asia and South America as we speak. And it’s despicable that there are many American ministries that are setting up shop in some of the poorest places in the world – and asking these people to GIVE their money to these so-called ministries – in exchange for the promise that if they DO, God will bless accept them -- favor them – bless them with goodies just like He’s blessed America.

So, poverty theology and prosperity theology are BOTH extremes which are blatantly unbiblical. That’s not to say that God might not call some to have more or less money than others – but it IS to say that neither financial poverty OR prosperity are reliable indicators of spiritual vitality and life. You can be rich or poor and be a very solid Christian… or you can be rich or poor and be a very solid dirt-bag as well!

Okay, let’s balance this thing out.

Someone said, “Blessed are the balanced: they shall outlast everyone.”

What I want to look at with you this morning is...

**3. PROPER theology** as it relates to money. And I can’t think of a better source for this than the teaching of Jesus Himself on these matters.

I invite you to turn with me to Matthew 6…

And the good news for all of us today is that the Bible’s chock full of practical wisdom for how to relate to money. When Jesus speaks about money and material things – one of the words He uses is the word “treasure.” Look at Matthew 6:19 with me – and we will read through verse 24…

**Matthew 6:19-24 *(19) Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. (20) But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. (21) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* (If you remember, Jesus made that same statement in Luke 12). *(22) The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. (23) But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!* *(24) No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.***

It would probably be safe to say that on SOME level, we all struggle with materialism. Jesus realized this in the first century – that most people not only struggle with materialism, but with the task of managing money.

Jesus taught on many different issues – and this particular message on money is found right in the middle of His *Sermon on the Mount*. And as He’s blazing a trail through many different topics, He eventually comes to this subject – and the BIG question Jesus raises here is simply *“Where’s your treasure?” Or in other words “Where’s your money?”*

And He goes on to help us search for the answer by giving us a series of FOUR “tests” or personal “pop-quizzes” that help us to get honest about our lives so that we won’t be hustled, hurt or harassed by materialism. So, I want to look at these four tests, will look at two this week and two more next week. The first one and you can jot this down…

1. **The DURABILITY Test (vs. 19-20)**

* *(19) Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.*
* *(20) But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

1. **The PASSION Test (vs. 21)**

* *(21) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

1. **The MIND Test (vs. 22-23)**
2. **The MASTER Test (vs. 24)**

* *(24) No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.*
* **Luke 12, verse 15**

*(15) Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”*