

i) Things decay .

In ancient times, wealth was measured in part by clothing. Garments represented a considerable investment. The best clothes were made of wool. No matter how beautiful the clothing, moths would often attack and chew right through the garments. Coupled with the attack of the killer moths, rust would corrode and consume things of value.

ii) Possessions disappear .

Valuables were often buried out in the field or hidden in a brick wall. Back then, thieves would literally break into the walls and dig up the yard as they searched for valuables. If you try to store your wealth, the moths will find it, or rust will consume it. If you try to hide it for yourself, thieves can steal it. Jesus is saying that earthly wealth is very insecure. It either decays over time, or it disappears altogether. Job 27:16, 20 provides a vivid description of this process.

b) Heavenly treasures are secure .

Earthly treasures are fleeting and futile but heavenly treasures are secure (1 Peter 1:4). The issue is not whether we will store up wealth. That's a given. The only question is where we will do our banking. Since earthly treasures are unstable and insecure, Jesus challenges us to make long-term investments that are permanent and guaranteed. Deposits made in the First National Bank of Heaven will not decay or disappear. They are protected and insured by God Himself.

That leads to another question: How do we make deposits on earth that yield dividends in heaven? You store up treasures in heaven by investing your money in that which lasts for eternity. There are only two things that will last forever: 1) The Word of God, and, 2) People. Everything else will decay or disappear. Cars, boats, homes, clothes, jobs, salaries, vacations, books, and buildings will all pass away. They wear out, rust out, blow up, or fall apart. Nothing that is material lasts forever. That's the way God set it up (1 John 2:17). Martyred Missionary Jim Elliot said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

Since only the Word of God and people last forever, we need to develop a long-term view. When we give of our financial resources to people in need, we are making a difference. The ultimate investment you can make is to give financially to help communicate the Word of God to people.

2) The Heart Test.

a) Where are your investments ?

The second test is found in verse 21. To put it plainly, Jesus is saying that your heart follows your money. That's not the way most of us think. We tend to think our money follows our heart -- if our heart is right, we will spend our money wisely. That's not the way it works because your heart always follows your treasure.

Whatever you invest your time and money in will become very important to you. Too many of us spend all that we have on the things of this world and then we wonder why we have trouble concentrating on the things of God. Our problem is that we've invested everything down here and hardly anything up there.

b) Your heart follows your money.

Our money keeps our heart tied to the earth. You'll never be able to get your heart focused on heaven as long as your attention is on material things. Your heart will always follow your money. Your heart will be wrapped up in what you treasure. Possessions can very easily become the center of our life.

3) The Mind Test.

a) Where is your focus ?

The third test is found in verses 22-23.

b) The eye symbolizes the mind.

Jesus is saying that there are only two possible ways to look at things. If our minds focus only on things down here, we'll be full of darkness. The natural eye focuses on our physical existence but the spiritual eye locks into what really matters. When money becomes our Number One obsession, it can put blinders on our eyes and ruin our spiritual life. If our thoughts are filled with how we can deposit treasures in heaven, our bodies will be full of light.

4) The Master Test.

a) "Whom will you serve ?"

The fourth and final test focuses on our will and is found in verse 24. To "serve" means that we've made a choice and engaged our wills. If we're not careful, we can be deluded by thinking material things will last forever. Our emotions can then affect our minds, which in turn can cause our wills to be in the grip of money with a capital "M." The word Jesus uses here for money is the word, "Mammon," which is a proper noun, or a name. Jesus viewed Money as a rival for preeminence. Attachment to money leads to a detachment from God. The Bible is absolutely clear about the venomous nature of money. It fights for supremacy in our lives and it has many of the characteristics of deity. It promises security, freedom and power.

To be a committed Christ-follower is not merely a matter of the emotions but also of our minds and wills. To love God requires service and even sacrifice. This type of allegiance cannot be rendered to two parties. Whatever we devote ourselves to becomes our God. The tension that many of us experience when we try to love both God and money will sooner or later begin to show where our real loyalty lies. Only one master will win out.

Money is not just a neutral medium of exchange, but a "power" with a life of its own which seeks to control, and even consume us. The goal of this Money Master is total domination of your value system, without you even being aware of it.

If you're serving the Money Master, Jesus says you will be unable to fully serve God. He doesn't say, "you better not" or "it would be unwise to serve both," He says, "you cannot serve both God and money." As such, how we handle our money has a lot to do with how serious we are about obeying God. His words are unsettling. If you love money, you will end up hating God. If you are devoted to the pursuit of possessions and the making of money, you will find yourself despising the things of God.

I suspect that most of you do not want to hate God. In fact, you're here because you want to learn how you can get to know Him better. Let me put it right on the table. You will never be able to fully love God if you are in love with money and all that money can buy. Loving God and loving money are mutually exclusive.

b) Money Talks .

We've all heard the expression "**Money Talks.**" Have you ever listened to what it says? Mine usually says "Good Bye!" Someone described it this way: "You hold me in your hand and call me yours. Yet may I not as well call you mine? See how easily I rule you? To gain me, you would all but die. I am invaluable as rain, essential as water. Yet I do not hold the power of life -- I am futile without the stamp of your desire. I go nowhere unless you send me. My power is terrific. Handle me carefully and wisely, lest you become my servant, rather than I yours." Someone else said, "Money is a wonderful servant, but a lousy master."

Conclusion

When Jesus was asked a question about a money matter, He told a story in Luke 12 that illustrates how easy it is to fail these four tests (Luke 12:15ff). Jesus warned

of greed in verse 15. Greed is something that we all struggle with. If we don't admit it and put up our guard, we will be consumed by it. The word means a "thirst for having more." The reason we have to watch out is because we can begin to think that our life consists of our possessions. If we have a lot, then we're doing well. If we don't have much, we feel like we're missing out on something - almost like we're not really living.

Jesus then tells a parable to show us what can happen if we take a short-term approach to life. The story of the foolish man reveals how we can fail all four tests. Notice how many times this man uses the words, "me", "myself" and "I." Twelve times in three verses. His greed is unchecked. His focus is on what he can see. He begins to feel good about himself and inflates his importance and expertise. It can be dangerous to be successful in life. You can begin to feel like you've got it made. The accumulation of things can deceive you into thinking that you're better off than you really are. Because of this man's windfall in his short-term investment, he decided to coast. He could retire and just take life easy. He had no concerns. His life consisted of eating, drinking and partying.

Do you see the deception? He was storing up treasures on earth with no long-term investment strategy for the next life. Notice verse 20. Because this man had an earthly perspective instead of a heavenly perspective, he focused his energy only on this life. God, however, has a different view of this man. Because he was laying up treasures for himself on earth, and had made no eternal investments, God calls him a fool. When he dies, all his possessions and his shiny new barns will disappear and be given to someone else. He failed the durability test, the heart test, the mind test, and the master test.

Jesus concludes this parable with an application for each of us in verse 21. Are you storing up things only for yourself? Are you just focused on this world? If so, you're in trouble. If I'm not rich toward God, God says that I'm a fool.

Friends, let me encourage you to take this four-part test on a regular basis.

1. The Durability Test. How long will my things last? Are they temporary or will they last forever in heaven?

2. The Heart Test. Where am I investing my time and money? What excites me the most, earth or heaven? Which place makes my heart beat faster?

3. The Mind Test. Where do I focus my goals? Am I committed to materialism or spirituality? Do I operate according to God's priorities, or my own?

4. The Master Test. Is Jesus my master or is something, or someone, else? Will I serve money on earth and allow it to be my god, or will I serve God in heaven with my treasures, which are really His in the first place?

Take These Tests Regularly!

Cooperating Together

Last Sunday was *Cooperative Program Sunday* for us as Southern Baptists. Their website shares this information.

What is the Cooperative Program?

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' unified plan of giving through which cooperating Southern Baptist churches give a percentage of their undesignated receipts in support of their respective state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention missions and ministries.

How Does It Work?

It begins with you! You give yourself first to God (II Corinthians 8:5). Next, out of gratitude and obedience to God for what He has done for you, you commit to give back to Him,

through your church, a portion of what He provides. This is commonly called a tithe and represents ten percent of your income (Leviticus 27:30, Malachi 3:10).

Your Church... decides the next step. Every year your church prayerfully decides how much of its undesignated gifts will be committed to reaching people in your state and around the world through *The Cooperative Program*. This amount is then forwarded to your State Baptist Convention. Messengers at the State Convention Annual Meetings from your church and other churches across the state decide what percentage of Cooperative Program gifts contributed by local congregations stay in your state to support local missions and ministries. The percentage to be forwarded to the SBC for North American and international missions and ministries is also determined at this time.

Messengers at the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting from across the country decide how the gifts received from the states will be distributed among SBC entities. These gifts are used by SBC entities to send and support missionaries, train pastors, and other ministry leaders; provide relief for retired ministers and widows; and address social, moral, and ethical concerns relating to our faith and families. The bottom line – people around the world hear the gospel and receive Christ!

Why Southern Baptists Embrace *The Cooperative Program*

It presents a unified and comprehensive budget, throwing a funding blanket over statewide, national and international missions and ministries. It provides a long term sustainability for our entities. When a church makes their missions giving as a percentage of their church budgets, it provides consistency and stability. It adheres to our long term Baptist principle that "we can do more together than alone."

The Cooperative Program mitigates competition between entities thereby allowing a balanced Acts 1:8 Strategy. It levels the playing field, and makes a place at the table for small and ethnic churches. Every church can stand hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, on level ground, as partners in the gospel (large churches, small churches, new churches, growing churches, graying churches, and ethnic churches).

God Bless You!

Bro. Allan

Opportunities For Service

Living out Your Spiritual Commitment... and Fulfilling Christ's Divine Plan

Sunday, April 17, 2016

Choir Rehearsal..... 9:00 am

Sunday School 9:15 am

Morning Worship.....10:30 am

Nursery: Volunteers as needed

Ushers: Ken Nice, Don Sharp,

Fred Kerns,????

Alternate: Isaac Waters

Evening Worship.....6:30 pm

Tuesday, April 19

SJBA Semi-Annual Meeting7:00 pm

Elected Messengers: Nellie Reynolds, Betty Anslinger, Don Beavers, Allan and Ellen Lane.

Wednesday, April 20

Youth Study..... 6:30 pm

Prayer / Bible Study 6:30 pm

Adult Choir 7:30 pm

Thursday, April 21

Food Pantry Day

Sunday, April 24, 2016

Choir Rehearsal..... 9:00 am
Sunday School 9:15 am
Morning Worship.....10:30 am
Nursery: Volunteers as needed
Ushers: John Lewis, Gary Yarbrough,
Joseph Coats, Isaac Waters

Alternate: Larry McKahan

Diversicare.....2:30 pm

Evening Worship..... 6:30 pm

Monday, April 25

Sunday School Workers Meeting.....6:30 pm

Tuesday, April 26

Associational VBS Workers Clinic at First Baptist Church6:30 pm

Wednesday, April 27

Youth Study..... 6:30 pm

Prayer / Bible Study6:30 pm

Adult Choir 7:30 pm

Up-Coming Events.....

April 17 — Food Pantry Collection

April 19 — SJBA Semi-Annual Meeting 7:00 pm

April 21 — Food Pantry Day

April 22-23 — Northwest Region Disaster Relief Training, Bethany

April 22-24 — Thunder On the Mountain 4 pm Fri.-5 pm Sat.

April 24 — Diversicare 2:30 pm

April 25 — Sunday School Workers Meeting

April 26 — SJBA VBS Workers Clinic, FBC Saint Joseph, MO

May 1 — Mission Trip Meeting, Calvary, 3:30 pm

GROW Team

Commit to **GROW!** **Everyone make a contact!** Invite someone to Bible Study and Worship this week. ☺

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Sunday Nights

We will have Sunday Evening Service here tonight. Plan to attend!

Wednesday Night Prayer and Bible Study

We will meet this Wednesday at 6:30 pm. Prayer matters!

4pm Fri., April 22-5pm Sat.. April 23

You are invited to join us as we make 'Thunder on the Mountain'

In praise to the Lord God.

Guest speaker is Billy Rivers of New Orleans, LA, former drug addict, biker gang member, and inmate. While in prison his life was changed when he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, and now wants to tell other people about the message of hope that changed his life.

Bikes, trikes, quads and rods, all patches and colors welcome!

Early check-in on Friday, with a cook out that evening. Limited lodging available.

Food Pantry

Today, April 17, is our collection day for Patee Park Food Pantry. You may donate monetarily or you may place your canned or boxed goods in the hallway basket any time.

The Associational Mission Trip for this summer will be June 8 - 12. We will be going to Fairview Heights, Illinois to work with **Crossover St. Louis**. We need for both adults and youth to go. We will be doing different work than we did last year in Omaha, but similar to what we have done in the past.

If you have any questions, call Allan Lane at [816-261-6831](tel:816-261-6831) or the SJBA office, [816-233-2504](tel:816-233-2504).

Vacation Bible School Workers Clinic

April 26, 2016

6:30—9:30 pm

First Baptist Church, Saint Joseph

1225 Francis, Saint Joseph

All church VBS Directors and Workers are encouraged to attend this training.

For the Record-

Attendance: April 10, 2016

Sunday School.....	41
Visitors.....	2
Total.....	43
Contacts Made.....	16
Morning Worship.....	49
Children's Worship.....	9
Sunday Night	7
Wednesday Night	?

Financial Record:

Weekly Budget.....	\$ 2,040.52
Offering Received...	\$ 1,249.58

Offering Received by Mail:

April Counting Team:

Don Beavers and Jordan Lane

April Van Driver:

Mike Green

Remember to call 232-3747
before 8 am if you need a ride.

April Member Birthdays:

05... Datha Dillon
13... Alice Coats
15... Larry McKahan
25... Jo Mayse
29... Lois Pace
30... Daniel Waters
30... Nikki Garber

April Anniversaries

Joe and Pam Battreal

April 17, 1999

Bill and Juanita Haskins

April 17, 1948

Joseph and Alice Coats

April 29, 2000

Prayer Requests ...

Lisa Bowers—Jack and Flo's daughter

Lester Buck — on Hospice

Joyce and Tim Izer—pray for healing

Dorothy Post—healing

Pat Puckett—strength

Susan Patten—strength

Mike Green—recovery

David Schottel—recovery

Ken Nice—surgery recovery

Alicia McKinnon—healing

LoLeta Middleton—eye infection

Maxine and George Ferbert

Betty Anslinger—surgery recovery

Sue Higgins—regain strength

Buddy Means—Mary Sharp's nephew

Ellen Blanton and Lois Ulmer—

Elvera's daughter & daughter-in-law

Stella Davis and Linda Rails—Doris' Richardson's sisters

Grant Schottel—advanced training

Henrietta Caballero—Brigida's Sister

Austin Chalfant—Abby's nephew

Gary and Marilyn Singleton—health

Bob Barquist Kathryn Beavers

Louanne Laurence Keon McKahan

Allen Jennings Ann Riddle

Jim Winans Jozy Winans

Nellie Reynolds Leona Reynolds

Kevin Duty Kenny Duty
Madeline Swink Bobby Griswold
Bill Haskins Debbie Sands
Brenda Burgess Judy Anderson
Carolyn Houts Roscoe Lane
Missionaries Don and Diane Combs
Nickolay Nazaruk, Peski 2 Church
David and Deborah Grace
Jeanette Swackhamer—Beja People
Our Nation and Leaders
Our Military Service people
Today's Prayer Requests ...

Our Nation and our Leaders ...

Five More New Families...
