

What Are You Living For?

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Bible Text: Matthew 6:19-21
Preached on: Sunday, September 24, 2017

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In the good and wise Providence of God, our text for this morning's message gives us a perfect response to everything that we've celebrated up to this point this morning. I'd invite you to turn to Matthew 6 and I'll read the text. It's going to be the subject of our attention this morning. Matthew 6, beginning in verse 19, our Lord Jesus said,

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 neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Now, everything that we've contemplated here this morning has emphasized to us that your good works cannot get you to heaven. In fact, Jesus said in John 3:3 that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again, specifically he said, "Truly, truly, I say to you," he said it emphatically, "unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

You see, part of the problem for unsaved men is they need a new heart. They need something new. They need something that they don't have. They need a gift from above to be given to them, and God told the nation Israel prior to the coming of Christ, to expect, to anticipate a time when he brought a new covenant to pass, one that would involve a change in their hearts. In Jeremiah 31, he said, "'this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,' declares the LORD, 'I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'" The prophet Ezekiel quotes God as saying in chapter 36, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." A new heart. You see, before a person comes to Christ, Scripture describes him as having a stony heart: cold, dead, lifeless, unresponsive to the true God, unresponsive to his word, unresponsive to the Gospel. What the promise of the new covenant is that God will come to us and give us a new heart; do a heart transplant, you might say, and remove that heart of stone and put instead a heart that is responsive to him, that is warm, that response to his word. And in Matthew 6:19, Jesus is showing us that that new heart has completely new priorities. It has completely different priorities and it's a practical outworking of conversion shown in what you love.

And it's really hard, we prayed before the service as elders that the Lord would somehow take what we are going to say today, take his word and drive it supernaturally deep into your hearts because it's too easy to assume that you're already like this. It's too easy to take too many things for granted, you might say and, my friends, I don't want you to take anything for granted this morning. I'm so grateful to God that so many of you are members, so many of you attend. I'm grateful for those of you that are visiting with us today, that you could be here with us, but the longer I go in ministry, the less I am willing to take for granted. The longer I preach, the less willing I am to just assume things and so I call you today to listen with tender and responsive ears to what Christ says because what he says here is the mark of true Christians and the absence of this shows that someone has never been truly converted. There is no in between, in other words. And I am ever mindful, it seems like I continually get reminders that it's just not wise for us to just assume that people that we mingle with week by week actually know the Lord. Indeed, Paul told the church of Corinthians, "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves."

So there should be this earnest reflection, especially among those of you that perhaps have been for a long period of time been pretty casual about your spiritual life as though Jesus was just something added on to what you were already doing. That is a lethal place to be spiritually and I know that our country, I know that our world, I know that the so-called evangelical church is filled with people like that who just view Christ as an add on to their other pursuits; who just view Christ as someone to help their earthly pursuits go better than they otherwise would, rather than having a radical reorientation of life that says, "Christ is the reason that I exist. Christ is the sum of my affections. Christ is all to me." You see, the true believer sees it from that perspective. Maybe sometimes it's through a little bit of mist, sometimes it gets a little bit foggy, but deep in the heart of every true believer is a recognition of the supremacy of Christ and that he is worth more than everything that this world could ever give to you, and Jesus here is giving us teaching to help us reflect and understand on that.

What I want to do here this morning might seem a little bit unusual but I'm convinced that it's the best way to bring the force of the passage to you. I want to start in verse 21 and I'll explain why. In verse 21, Jesus is giving the point of everything that he's saying in verses 19 and 20. It is to this conclusion that he is pointing as he says the things in 19 and 20, and in verse 21 he says, "for," in other words, because or for this reason, "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Now, Jesus has said in verses 19 and 20, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth." He commands instead, "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven." So there is a contrast, a negative and a positive command. Don't store up what you value and treasure here on earth, instead store up in your affections and what you seek in life and what you want out of life, the things that are related to the kingdom of heaven. And why would that be important? Well, he explains in verse 21, "for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." So he's calling you to think about what it is that's most important to you; what it is that you build your life on; what it is that you set your aspirations for and what you hope for in the future; what it is that you are longing for. He says you've got to consider this. He is teaching something

very deep and profound that goes to the very core of your being saying, "What is it, in other words, that you love?" And he calls us to think on that because he says, "What you love is a reflection of where your heart is."

Now, there is something that I think is very sweet and compelling about the structure of verse 21 in the original language. As we read it, it says, "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Fine enough. That's a fair translation of the original Greek but you lose something with that translation that leaps off the page when you read it in the original language. The words for "your heart" come at the end of the Greek sentence here. It's a very unusual construction and with that construction, the way that it reads is "for where your treasure is, there also will be your heart." Your heart comes at the end. It's the last words that this section leaves you with and it shows what he's emphasizing. It hangs in the air, as it were, and it refuses to leave. It's as if he had said, "where your treasure is, there also will be your heart," and it echoes like you had shouted it out into an acoustic valley. "There will be your heart..your heart...your heart...your heart...your heart." That's his emphasis and that's what's supposed to reverberate in your mind as you contemplate this, is it's a call to examine your heart and to think about what it is that you treasure there.

What is the heart? We could say it simply: it refers to your total inner man. It is the center of your personality. It embraces your mind, emotions and will. It's the Mission Control Center of your life. It's what drives you. It's what motivates you. It's what you care about, long for, aspire after. You get the idea. And he says, "Don't store up treasures on earth, store up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

Now, I must clarify from the beginning here something very important and clear away a misconception of your mind that is sometimes repeated by fine Bible teachers, the sense that you could read this and think that it's just a statement condemning earthly wealth. Well, the truth of the matter is, that's not what Jesus is talking about. Oh, that's a part of it but it's not what he's really getting at because the emphasis here is not on treasures, per se, it's on your heart. It's on your heart...your heart...your heart...your heart. And we know that Jesus is not making a blanket condemnation of earthly wealth as we compare Scripture with Scripture. In God's word in 1 Timothy 6, the Apostle Paul said that Timothy should instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches but on God who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. He doesn't condemn those with earthly wealth, he simply gives them particular instruction that applies to their circumstances, and rather than telling them to forsake all of their earthly wealth, to give it away, it says nothing like that. Paul simply tells Timothy to instruct people of means with where their heart should be, "Don't fix your hope on what you have and use your riches to accomplish good for the others that you have opportunity to be good to, and to remember and to focus on God who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy."

You see, beloved, you must understand this: the presence or absence of riches is incidental to Jesus' point here and it's easy enough to show that and convince you of it. Let me say this and then I'll prove my point. Instead, Jesus is asking a far more searching

question. What Jesus is asking in essence is, "What are you living for? What matters to you? What are your goals and aspirations in life?" That's his question. That's his point and it's easy enough to see that if you just contemplate with some common sense the reality of human life.

Isn't it true that a beggar on the street can be greedy and selfish and totally preoccupied with the things of this world, and as he does so, he's in direct violation of Jesus' words? The fact that he doesn't have means doesn't mean that he loves heaven, he just wants what the world has and doesn't have it so he goes out and begs for it. The presence or absence of means says nothing about it. By contrast, you could have a man of immense means, a man of immense wealth, a multimillionaire, who generously supports the work of the kingdom of God, who walks in a humble way seeking those that he can bless with the means that the Lord has trusted with him. And a man like that would be fulfilling Jesus' words perfectly. You see, it's not about the number in your bank account at all. The question is, the emphasis here is your heart.

So you must not think about this passage as talking primarily about money. It's not. It is talking about your heart. Jesus is bringing to mind the total inner man of you and saying, "Let's take a look at what we see and what we find here." It's about what your heart loves. So we're going to make the contrast with that point made between verses 19 and 20, we're going to make a contrast here to have you consider your earthly pursuits and contrast them with a true heavenly treasure.

So let's consider Jesus' words a little more closely. Look at verse 19 with me again where Jesus says,

19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

The way that the original language could be translated, it's perfectly fine the way it is, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth," but the present tense involved in the negative command could also be translated this way, "Stop storing up treasures for yourselves. Stop doing what you're doing and do something else," combined with verse 20. And what he is saying here is this, beloved, and again, I'm just so mindful of the help that we all need of the Holy Spirit right this minute, right this moment. Jesus is commanding you to break away from your earthly preoccupations; to break away from your love from them so that you might embrace an attitude that treasures first the kingdom of God, and what he goes on to say is he lovingly teaches us in an irrefutable way the utter folly of devoting your life to the things of this world. The utter folly of it. Treasures is that to which you attach greatest value. It may be material wealth but it is broader than that and Jesus illustrates it here with the sense of clothing and valuables.

Now, in the first century, their approach and their possession of clothing was much different than what we are used to. We all have a lot of different things that we wear, some more than others, but in the first century, clothing was limited. It was not easily replaced and it was vulnerable to being eaten by moths and other such things.

Look at it there in verse 19, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy," moth being that which would attack clothing, rust being that which would destroy other valuables by rats or mildew or the elements, and we know that Jesus is addressing these kinds of things. If you drop down in verse 25 which builds on what we're going to see this week and next week and then we will get to verse 25 the following week, Jesus says, "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" See? So he's going to the very basics, the very elements of day to day life and what he's saying is this: is that clothing, speaking to his original audience, clothing, stored grain, stored food, other possessions, are subject to decay, corruption and loss despite your best efforts to protect them. Life has a way of taking it away. And when he says there in verse 19, look at it there with me, "where thieves break in and steal," he is referring to the fact that thieves in the first century would literally dig through the mud walls. I'll say that again, they would literally dig through the mud walls of first century homes in order to get at the valuables that were inside and they would carry them away.

So he's showing to his first century audience the utter folly of loving the things that they owned and possessed because they were subject to be taken away at any time. Moths eat, rust corrodes, thieves break in and steal, and he is exposing to them their utter vulnerability in life and says, "Because life is like that," listen to me, beloved, "because life is like that, don't set your heart on this because it can all be lost in a moment." It is a gracious word from Christ telling his people how to think about life so that you don't end up wasting it and the reality left his audience in the first century with a sad reality. He had shown them in ways that were common to their experience the fact that the fruit of their earthly labor could be taken away at any time.

Now, we don't have mud walls in our modern day construction. We have mothballs to keep insects away from our clothing. We have maybe different issues but, beloved, you must listen to me, you must hear me on this: what Jesus is saying to you is the exact same and these words hit you exactly where you live in the same way it hit the first audience, even though the outward effects of it may be just a little bit different. Think with me. Think with me. The things that you love, perhaps have lost. For some young people, your girlfriend, your boyfriend, breaks up with you and goes away and leaves you with a broken heart. You lose your job. The housing market collapses. Wall Street tumbles exponentially. Your marriage is messed up. Your family is messed up. Even in loving homes, children grow up and leave and there is a reason why it's called the empty nest syndrome. "Oh, everything I built my life around is gone." Yeah, precisely. You feel the empty nest because you were a little preoccupied with the wrong thing, as good as it might have been. Beloved, we could just multiply and keep on going, couldn't we? Accidents happen. Friends betray you. Sickness comes. Loved ones die and eventually death comes looking for you and knocks on your door and says, "It's time. You come with me." Beloved, don't you see? Don't you see that sooner or later it is inevitable that life is going to shatter your aspirations? It's inevitable. There is a reason they say you can't take it with you. There is a reason that Job said, "Naked I came into this world and

naked I will depart from it. I came in with nothing, I'm going out with nothing." Don't you see, beloved? Don't you see that that reality should utterly transform the way that you think about life and what it is that you want out of life and what it is that you love and what you pursue? "Why," Jesus says, "why do you devote yourself to that which is certain to be lost in the end? Why do you do that? It's foolish." In big things and little things, Jesus teaches us to expect loss, to realize that everything about this life comes attached with an expiration date, everything about this life comes with a passing dimension that cannot be avoided. You've been to funerals. You've been to cemeteries, right? All of that is a silent testimony to the truth of what our Lord is saying to us here today.

Now, the question is, the question is for each one of you: is have you calculated that into your approach to life or not? Have you considered this and understood and had it hit you with force, "This changes the way that I live. This changes everything that I love. This changes what I want out of life." It's not that you have to quit your job. It's not that you have to give everything up and go live like a hermit. It's not about that. You could give it all up and still love it as you're handing it away. The question is, the question is, beloved: what is it that grips your heart? What is it that makes you happy? What is it that makes you sad? What is it that changes your demeanor?

Let's approach it from another way and we can evaluate it this way that I think is helpful. I think about these things. I don't know how many people do. I know some do, I don't know how many do. But let's step back, those of you that are in your adult years, your thirties, your forties and beyond, let's look back and consider something different. Look back over your life and consider the places where you were at forks in the road where you made life altering decisions. You took this job, not that job. You married this spouse, not that spouse. You moved to this location and not to another location. You get the idea. It's not that difficult. Ask yourself, those of you that still have your memory, mine is kind of seeping away in my advancing years, but that's okay. Ask yourself what was it that was motivating me when I chose the left fork instead of the right fork? Were you motivated in life by the things of the kingdom of God when you made those life decisions? Or if you're honest, would you be forced to say it was more about gratifying your own selfish desires? It was a pursuit of prestige, a pursuit of power, a pursuit of wealth, a pursuit of glory rather than, you know, was there any consideration of Christ, of his kingdom, of the things to come in heaven? Was there any consideration in your life about those things? Answer me, not verbally, not here. What I'm saying when I say that is answer the question in your heart because you must come to grips with this. It is only when we look back and see our selfish pursuits and the selfish way that we perceived life and the selfish way that we lived it that we start to see, "It was all about earthly treasures to me. My course of life had nothing to do with Christ up until now."

Well, that's a big wake up call if that's true because Scripture is telling you today that everything you've built it on is going to be lost in the end. So what are you doing? Why are you living that way? It doesn't even make any sense, does it? You see, these earthly treasures are like a mirage in the desert, it looks real, it looks enticing, and you go to it and the more you go to it, the further away it gets until ultimately it just dissipates into

the mist. It's like smoke in the wind and it's gone and you look back at where you came from and you say, "This was a complete waste of time."

I've had conversations with people about this, people whom life has blessed who see this and realize all of the stuff, it doesn't mean anything in the end. That's a little bit unsettling, in one sense, because you've still got to manage and keep the stuff but that's the right perspective, to realize, "Do you know what? This doesn't go anywhere in the end." It's especially sad and poignant to hear unsaved people in their eighties talk this way. "Everything I've got here, this grand home, it doesn't mean anything." And here we are, some of us, wishing we had what they had and they have already seen through it and said, "Nah, it's worthless." And you work your way through all of it, the whole book of Ecclesiastes teaches us this point, doesn't it, the vanity of vanities of life.

So you might say, "Well, what's the point, then? What's the reason of this existence? Is there any hope in this world of futility?" Speaking perhaps a touch more sympathetically, everything I say is done in sympathy for the well-being of your soul, I trust you know that. You should. What if you find yourself today sitting on a heap of ashes of broken dreams with everything torn apart and nowhere to turn? Your marriage has failed. Your loved ones have left you. Maybe you are completely alone. What then? Do you realize that in these words of Jesus not only do you see a way of understanding it, he gives us a perspective to understand it, but also there is a beacon of hope in it, in that the Lord as he teaches us from this passage is showing us that he has already anticipated your earthly loss, he already understood it. He knew in advance that it was going to end up empty for you in the end. Finally, finally as we come to Christ in his word, finally we realize we have someone who actually understands the nature of life and we don't have somebody with a marketing degree who is trying to sell us another bill of goods to go after the next mirage so that he can make money off of your empty pursuits. Praise God that there is a Christ in this universe who actually has our well-being in mind; who is not selling us a bill of goods; who is not leading us astray. Praise God! Hallelujah, praise the Lamb!

So what does Jesus do? Well, it brings us to our second point as he continues to teach us. He said, "Consider your earthly pursuits and recognize that they are vain and empty." And you young people, I cannot help myself sometimes, you young people who are in your teens, oh, you need to take this to heart because if you would embrace this now, it would utterly change and alter the trajectory of your life. It doesn't matter that you are 15 or 16 or 17. That is the prime time to think about this rather than these older folks that have wasted their life because they didn't consider it. They don't have the same amount of time to work out the consequences here. God will be gracious to them but God is giving you an opportunity right here, right now, to embrace this and say, "Yeah, I'm not going to live for the things of this world." You must, you must think this way, young men, young women. This is the opportunity of a lifetime given to you in God's word, to seriously contemplate what it is that you are going to give your life to and what you are going to set your affections on. It will change who you want to marry. It will change what you want to do in a career. It will change what you want to do with whatever wealth the Lord gives to you. It will change everything if you will simply heed the word of Christ. This is an act of grace of God to all of us to bring these things to our minds.

Now, what Jesus does is he contrasts it with a second point. He said, "Consider your earthly pursuits," now secondly, you could summarize verse 20 by saying he says, "Consider a heavenly reward." Consider a heavenly reward. Look at verse 20 with me where he says,

20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

What a blessing. Jesus says that you can give your life over to things that no one can take away; where there is no corruption to diminish it, there is no place where thieves can take away. For the heart that is given over to Christ, to the heart that loves him and is given over to his pursuits, you are in an unassailable position of strength because men cannot take that away from you because it is given by God, guaranteed by his promises, guaranteed by the blood of the eternal covenant and kept by the Holy Spirit until it is delivered to you safely in the end in heaven. You can, as it were, I'm speaking metaphorically here, this is a word picture: you can put your money in a heavenly bank that no one can rob. Rather than build on earthly sand, you can build on the Rock of Christ.

Look at verse 20 with me one more time here. Notice the contrast that he makes. He says, "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal." There is a contrast between the earthly and the heavenly. Jesus says earthly treasures will rot. He says heavenly treasures will not. And what are these heavenly treasures? He doesn't really describe it here in this verse, he just makes the statement, "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven," but he doesn't describe what they are. So what are we to understand that he's talking about? Well, whenever you have come to that point in a passage of Scripture, you ask yourself a simple question, anybody can do it, a child that is able to read is able to answer the question and able to do what the answer tells you to do. You just look at the context. Step back and ask yourself what has Christ been talking about in this sermon that might somehow deal with heavenly reward?

Well, let's take a little survey and review things that we've learned in the past, as we've seen in the past. Look at Matthew 5:12, or actually verse 11. Matthew 5:11, Jesus says, "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Jesus says, "I know perfectly well that as you follow me and as you live out the Christian life, that there are going to be times where people insult you and persecute you and harm you simply because of your desire faithful to me." He says, "Don't let that earthly setback discourage you or cause you to think wrongly about life." He says, "Instead, rejoice and be glad." Why? Because there is a heavenly reward for that kind of suffering. Your Father sees it, your Father from heaven sees it. He sees you suffering for the name of Christ and bless his holy name, he says, "I will reward you. I will honor you. I will give you blessing in heaven when that happens." Look, look, we do not serve Christ in vain. Your labor in

Christ is not in vain, therefore, 1 Corinthians 15:58 says, "be steadfast, immovable, always strong in the Lord, always abounding in the work, knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." To which I say, amen.

Jesus spoke about it more, Matthew 6:4, these things that we have looked at more recently. We'll tie all of these things together with a very simple statement. He talks about practicing your righteousness before men in chapter 6:1. He says in verse 3, "when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." Don't do it for earthly observation. Don't store it up for earthly treasure, earthly praise. Verse 4, do it, "so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you." Look at verse 6, "when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you." Verse 18, do your fasting "not [to] be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you."

He talked about it later, Matthew 10:41 and 42. Matthew 10:40, he says, "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward."

Do you know what the beauty of all of this is, beloved? You see these discussions of reward tied to private suffering for the sake of the name of Christ, private giving that only God sees, private praying, private fasting that only God sees, there is no one to congratulate you or tell you how great and spiritual you are, do you know what all of this is describing? Do you know how you store up a heavenly treasure? It's available to anybody that belongs to Christ. You store up heavenly treasure with simple, unadorned, quiet devotion to Christ that men cannot stop you from doing, that man cannot take away. And beloved, when you gather it all up and realize it, this becomes the answer to the question: where is your treasure? What is it that you value the most? Because you see, beloved, and let's remember it and think about it this way, let's keep the whole context of this morning's service in mind as we shared in the remembrance of the body and the blood of Christ, as we sang, "Hallelujah, praise the Lamb." As we sang, "Hallelujah, what a Savior." The whole point of those great hymns, that great anthem, the whole point of remembering the death of Christ in communion is to remember the great treasure that has been handed to you in Christ and to respond to that with a heartfelt affection that says, "That is the greatest thing in the universe. That is the best thing of all." I mean, the line in, "Hallelujah, what a Savior," says that if the whole realm of nature were mine, that wouldn't be enough to give in response to the gift of salvation that I have in Christ. The physical universe wouldn't be enough to offer to him as an adequate response of thanks to the fact that he voluntarily shed his blood to save you from your sin. It wouldn't be enough and the Christian says, "Ah, I get it." Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all. That's where my heavenly treasure is. My heavenly treasure is Christ and, "Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life I'll sow," in the words of Martin Luther. The body they may kill, they may take it all away from me, they might cast me

into prison like they did the noble men of old, as some of our extended friends in Syria have known in their service to Christ. God bless them. You see, beloved, you can lose it all when you have Christ because when you have Christ only then do you truly have it all. And when your life is oriented toward simple affection and obedience and pleasing him, then you are storing up the treasures and you can let the other stuff be secondary in your affections.

Beloved, and those of you that are going through present trials now, I say this to edify you, to help you, to encourage you even though the challenge of these words is great and vast. When you value Christ above all else, you are in a position where you can actually shrug your shoulders at earthly loss and say, "That's not what I was living for anyway. That's not what it's about to me. I'm a pilgrim passing through. This world is not my home. My home is in heaven. My love is in heaven. That's what I'm living for and I understand with clarity that no man can take that away from me. And therefore, despite this loss, I am in the same possession and in the same position of blessing that I was beforehand. That's not what I was living for anyway. What I'm living for still belongs to me." And this deals the deathblow to anxiety. This deals the deathblow to fear. This deals the deathblow to all of that anxious consideration of the things that are happening in your life. "I belong to Christ and he belongs to me, what is there to fear because I'm not living for these other things."

When one of my dearest mentors in ministry, though I never met him, when Martyn Lloyd-Jones was nearing the end of his earthly life and his physical health was declining after several decades of faithful pulpit ministry, he reached a point where his ill health prevented him from preaching any longer and he had been preaching for, what, 50 years by this point? Maybe a little longer. Ian Murray, his biographer, tells us based on a personal interview at the time with the great Dr. what his perspective was on the time, on that time in his life when he was basically just confined to his chair to wait for his earthly life to end and preaching was over for him now, as it will be one day for me. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said to him this and I quote, he said, "People say to me, 'It must be very trying for you not to be able to preach.' To which he replied, 'No. Not at all. I was not living upon preaching.'" A man of his stature, a man whose works are echoing and spreading more broadly today than when he was alive, a man of that stature says the preaching can be taken away. That's not what I was living for. When the preaching was gone, Christ was still with him and he quietly went into eternity with the words of 2 Corinthians 4:18 fresh on his mind where it says though the outer man is decaying, the inner man is being renewed day by day. That's where his heart was. That wasn't an exclusive opportunity for him, it's the way that Christ calls all of us to live.

Beloved, unsaved and saved alike, Jesus calls you to forsake your love of this world and to love and treasure him preeminently above all else. Have you? Do you? Will you? What are you living for? What are you living for? Answer well and answer truly because where your treasure is, there also will be your heart.

Let's bow together in prayer.

Lord, take these words, seal them to our affections, convict those who have rejected you that they might come to a saving faith in Christ right now, and help the rest of us that belong to Christ and always struggle in this flesh with the issue of priorities and what's important, Father, give us clarity of mind to assess our own heart, to repent where we have loved the world at times more than you, and to set our affections on our heavenly home where we will find our heavenly Savior waiting to embrace us with his nail scarred hands which purchased our redemption at the cross of Calvary. O Lord Jesus, in the midst of all of our struggles and failures in all of this, we rise up to the call of your word here this morning and we say, "Yes, Lord, we love you preeminently above all else. Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life I will sow, the body they may kill, your truth and your glorious Son, O heavenly Father, abideth still." And in that we find our purpose for living and the answer to every need of our heart. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

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