

Love the Other (Matt 6:9-13, 19-24)

Introduction: *Loving God for his own sake*

“Love is the soul of religion, and that which constitutes a real Christian.... What is love? It is a holy fire, kindled in the affections [or ‘emotions’], whereby a Christian is carried out strongly after God as the supreme good” (Watson, *Ten Commandments*, p. 6). *How can we set our hearts on God and God’s ways?*

1. Investment (v. 20, 21)

What is “treasure in heaven?” Luke 12:33, “Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys.” “For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works” (Mat 16:27, see 5:12, 5:46, 10:41-42, 25:21). Invest yourself heavily in *righteousness*, in *good works*, in *loving even our enemies*, and in the service of God’s *kingdom and glory*.

The essential principle of investment is, ***your heart follows your treasure***. The question of course is, where have you been investing? Where has your treasure been leading your heart?

2. Divestment (v. 19, 24)

Not only are worldly investments notoriously unstable—do I have to tell you—they are *all* doomed to perish. *Cash* can be divided. But a *heart* must not be divided. "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him" (Joh 14:23). God, says Asaph, is “the strength of [our] heart and [our] portion forever” (Ps 73:26). “Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy” (1Ti 6:17).

Conclusion: *Confidence in God for everything else*

1. It’s not that God needs our love. Not that he needs it, but that he might make it better. “My son, give me your heart” (Prov 23:26).
2. Although Jesus speaks of reward and treasure, Christian love is not mercenary. People want God to bless America, but what are the blessings they’re praying for? Economic prosperity, national security, well-being? To have these things without God, many Americans would be well-pleased. But for us it would be like a wake
3. The investment choice Jesus gives is not *either* having all that you need now on earth *or* having treasure in heaven. “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Mat 6:33).
4. Ungodly people (as a society) end up living ungodly lives, and corruption, oppression, and misery mark they downfall. “All these things” are not added unto them. But the reverse is true for nations and societies