**Pastor Tim’s Message Notes 2-6-2022
Treasures in Heaven**

One of the things that I am thankful that we offer here at Chestnut Grove is a monthly book club. And it is not a club in the exclusive sense, for all are welcome and invited to participate. And I highly recommend it.

Tomorrow we are discussing our first book, *The Problem of Pain.* Now I must admit that the reading in this particular book was not the easiest, so it may have been a problem and it likely did cause a measure of pain just to try to navigate this book.

But Carolyn loved it! I’m just kidding. She persevered through it. Although I do think we will still have a good and beneficial time discussing the book tomorrow evening.

It was early on in my reading of *The Problem of Pain* I realized I needed to adjust my schedule a bit in order to give it the time and attention that was needed. I knew that I needed to focus on this book if I was to glean from it what I believe the Lord wanted me to glean from it.

This reminds me of an important truth, which is that our focus and our priorities makes a huge difference in life. For what we focus on shows what we are invested in.

Today we are one week from the Super Bowl and it is safe to assume that the coaches and players on both teams are very focused on preparing for the big game, which is certainly understandable and expected.

But the question for us today is what is to be our primary focus in life? What is highest priority and the thing that we pursue more than anything?

To help us answer this question, we turn again to Jesus’ amazing Sermon on the Mount, which we’ve been blessed to look at for a few weeks now. Today, we find ourselves in Matthew 6:19-34. Let us hear God’s Word together. And as we do, let us think about what is the Lord calling us to focus on and make of utmost importance in our lives.

Jesus says these words:

**19“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

**22“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy,[**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6%3A19-34&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23305a)**] your whole body will be full of light. 23But if your eyes are unhealthy,[**[**b**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6%3A19-34&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23306b)**] 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 you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.**

**25“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life[**[**c**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6%3A19-34&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23310c)**]?**

**28“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.**

In this teaching of Jesus, our Lord presents two options for how people can live. Only one of them, however, is the way that is truly life-giving. And Jesus does this through several examples.

First, He describes this in terms of treasure. People can be focused on earthly treasure or heavenly treasure. Earthly treasures eventually wear out. Trophies, even Super Bowl trophies, collect dust and have no eternal value.

Heavenly treasures, on the other hand, will last forever. These treasures are secure. They cannot be stolen or break or wear out. They’re eternal.

Again, the issue is priorities. There is nothing wrong with winning trophies, but as Christians we are to pursue heavenly, eternal treasure.

Second, Jesus uses the example of the eyes. Either the eyes are healthy and the entire body is full of light or they are unhealthy and the entire body is full of darkness.

The eyes represent one’s spiritual vision, their focus in life, what path they are on. Our Lord wants our focus to be on this healthy path.

Certainly, Jesus is not complimenting people that have 20/20 vision and criticizing those who cannot see well or at all, but He is talking about having a healthy focus or vision for their lives.

Chris, our dear brother in Christ here at Chestnut Grove, although he has not been able to physically see in this life, he lives with a strong vision for the Lord. His heart and his mind are focused on the things of God. His eyes are healthy and so his whole body is full of light. And bless you Chris for your faith. We love & appreciate you.

But again, the issue is again --- are people seeing clearly what is more important in life to focus on or not?

Third, Jesus speaks about two masters – God or money.

People cannot serve both. Again, there is nothing wrong with money in and of itself. But while money makes an excellent servant, it makes a terrible master.

When God is the master, the person is focused on living to serve God.

And then fourth and finally, Jesus addresses the issue of anxiety and worry. Certainly, our Lord is aware that all of us experience these emotions in our lives.

But when worrying takes over our lives, it reveals that our priorities are not in a good place.

And Jesus teaches this crowd of listeners to trust that God is aware of their needs and He will care for them.

Again, the question that Jesus was presenting in several different ways is what is to be one’s primary focus in life?

And then Jesus’ answer comes in verse 33.

**33But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.**

He is telling his audience that above all things in life, seek first God’s Kingdom and allow that to become your top priority in life and God will guide you.

So friends, as we process this teaching of our Lord, what is that big takeaway?

And it is simply that our primary focus in our lives is to be God’s Kingdom. We are to see everything through the lens of the kingdom of God growing within us.

I love the phrase that Wheaton College in Illinois often uses, which is that we are to “think Christianly.”

Friends, everything that we are doing, we are to do it Christianly.

It seems like every year there are players in the Super Bowl that are Christians before they are athletes. That their highest priority is glorying Jesus and advancing His kingdom, rather than winning a super bowl, even though they work hard to do that as well.

It is really a matter of priorities. When I was a child, I was very much into sports --- playing sports and watching sports and rooting on my teams.

I took it quite seriously. Even croquet. I was in it to win it. And I tended to be not the best loser when I lost.

But after I came to the faith, while I still enjoyed playing and followings sports, they became less important.

Friends, Jesus is looking for followers that do not try to incorporate Him into their life, but for followers that make Jesus their life.

When we are seeking first His Kingdom and His righteousness, we are storing up treasuring in heaven. We are seeing life through a clear and healthy spiritual eye, we are serving God rather than money, and we trusting Him to meet our needs.

In short, each day is another opportunity to choose to focus on God and His Kingdom or to attempt to build a kingdom unto ourselves. Jesus invites us to choose God each day and live it. By the help of the Holy Spirit, may this be so in each of our lives. Amen.