

THE GREAT BATTLE

Separated Unto God

THIS ISSUE OF OUR NEWSLETTER, I will be looking at Matthew 6:19-34 concerning the great battle each of us finds ourselves in.

The great battle of faith is between trusting in that which can be seen and that which is unseen: the things of this earth and the Devil's kingdom versus the unseen things of God and His kingdom.

Since the first man and woman were created the battle is waged. Eve chose that which was pleasing to look upon, good for food, and good for making one wise; and released sin throughout all creation. The battle, though the choices before us may seem insignificant and trivial, is a serious matter to God. Since we do not gather physical arms and travel long distances to enter face-to-face conflict, we often overlook the seriousness and eternal consequences that waits patiently to pounce on those choosing the things of this world above the things of God. We must understand the battle: it is between anything that is seen, touched, and felt, anything, though it may be harmless in and of itself; anything, though it may be permitted for our use; anything, though it may be a necessity of life.

In this portion of Scripture Jesus teaches the seriousness of living unto God, separated from that not of Him; regardless of the value we place on that which is seen.

MOTHS, RUST AND THIEVES

Matthew 6:19-21

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

First, Jesus teaches that to live unto God is to Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth. When he says, Lay not, it is clear that it is an active pursuit of something we deem to be of value for our lives. He is clear that anything in this world can be held as a treasure when he speaks of moths and rust eating away at it and thieves breaking in to steal it. Is there anything on earth that cannot be eaten by moths, corrupted by rust, or stolen by thieves? There is nothing. And there is nothing on earth that can compare to the value of entering the eternal kingdom. Even if a man were to own everything in the world, it would seem as rubbish compared to the mansion that will be given to God's people in the eternal kingdom.

The line is drawn in the sand. Jesus is making it clear that our heart's true focus is where our treasure is. Examine yourselves as to what it is you truly value: things, pleasures, and the

pleasantries of life or the things which cannot be felt or touched or heard and are in the unseen heavenly places?

AN EVIL EYE

Matthew 6:22, 23

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

Second, Jesus teaches that to live unto God is to be single minded, not striving to hold onto both the treasures of the earth and the unseen treasures with God. Our life is to be devoted toward one goal; ½ God in all of our life: our books, our videos, our entertainment, our clothes, our job, our family, or whatever is of this earth that can be seen and touched and felt. When our life revolves around things seen and we seek the best of both worlds, Jesus says we have an evil eye. It is not possible to value anything in this world without it corrupting the Spirit of God within us. When the Spirit of God becomes corrupted, any perceptions of the things in heaven become unclear, very dark. People living in darkness are people living without God.

The line is drawn in the sand. Jesus is making it clear that it is our responsibility not to cross that line by living a life that is entirely separated and focused upon Him. Examine yourself as to what it is you focus upon, strive for, and value in life: the things which are seen and of this earth or the things which are not seen and reserved in heaven for you.

GOD AND MAMMON

Matthew 6:24

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Third, Jesus teaches that to live unto God is to remove anything that hinders our being single minded toward God.

Jesus is clear that we cannot live under the rule of two masters. One will always be in control. No matter how much we think we are governed by the Spirit and light of God, a little darkness, just a little indulgence in the things of this world will corrupt and darken any resemblance of Christ within us. It is impossible, impossible to indulge in the things of this world and be a follower of God.

The line is drawn in the sand. Jesus is making it clear that we are to live entirely separated unto Him by removing anything that hinders us from being single-minded toward God.

LET GOD

Matthew 6:25-30

Fourth, Jesus teaches that to live unto God is to...

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Jesus wants to make sure that we understand what he means concerning living separated from everything this world has to offer. He breaks it down to the very essentials of life: food, drink, and clothing. Without food and drink our life on earth would cease. Yet when we go to the cupboard and find there is no food, or we find there is no money to buy food or any way of obtaining food anytime soon, this does not justify taking our thoughts off God and placing them on our need.

We are not to value even the earthly things of food and drink above the things of God. To do so is to live like Gentiles, people without God, without faith. God already knows we need these things. We are to keep our focus on Him and let him work it out to meet our needs.

DON'T LIVE LIKE PEOPLE WITHOUT GOD

Matthew 6:31-34

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Fifth, Jesus teaches that to live unto God is to...

1. Not fill our mind with our present needs and troubles of this world, even if they are necessary for our survival. (31)
2. Recognize that there is a God, He is real, alive and already knows that you need these things and He will provide for you. (32)
3. Since God is well aware of our needs, we don't have to let them be a burden or worry, they are in God's hands. We need only to focus on Him, the things that belong to Him, and live a life pleasing to Him: He's got it taken care of, trust Him. Worry and stress is the result of thinking we need to do

something and not being able to do it-- let go, let God. (33)

4. Since God will take care of tomorrow, we do not need to consider whether we will have what we need. God's got it under control. Let go. Let God. (34)

In our twenty-first century, God is moving His people to live unto Him and Him alone. He has called them out of denominations, out of schools, out of workplaces, out of homes, and out of our present culture to seek Him wholly through a separated life. No matter how much paycheck, status, and security draws you, choose to be single-minded in your relationship with God and be ready for an adventure as God moves in your life.

~2008