

The Problem of Materialism

Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. MATERIALISM: The tendency to give undue importance to material interests – *Webster*
2. The Lord has WARNED about MATERIALISM over and over:
 - a. Luke 12: 15 – 21
 - b. Matt. 6:24
 - c. The church at Laodicea – Rev. 3: 14 – 19
 - d. Ananias and Sapphira – Acts 5: 1 – 11
 - e. Materialism in the days of Lot – Luke 17;28; Ezek. 16: 49.
 - f. In the parable of the Sower – Matt. 13:22 “*choke the word*”
3. Paul gave warnings as he wrote about Materialism:
 - a. To the saints at Colossae – Col. 3:1 – 2
 - b. To the church at Philippi – Phil. 3: 18 – 19.
 - c. To Timothy – I Tim. 6:6 – 11; 6: 17 -19.
4. One of the great problems we have in the church to day is MATERIALISM, the serving of Mammon – Matt. 6:24.
5. Let us see WHAT the New Testament says about MATERIALISM, and then see how it is affecting the church today.

I. JESUS STRESSED THE SPIRITUAL ABOVE THE MATERIAL.

- a. He taught we are to “*seek first the kingdom of God*” – Matt. 6: 33, 24.
- b. He taught the soul is more valuable than the whole world – Matt. 16:26.
- c. He taught us not to fear them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul—Matt. 10:28.
- d. He taught His kingdom was NOT of this world – John 18: 36; Rom. 14:17.
- e. Jesus warned about engaging in Giving, Praying, and Fasting, to have the glory of men for one’s reward:
 - i. Giving – Matt. 6: 1 – 4
 - ii. Prayer – Matt. 6: 5 – 6
 - iii. Fasting – Matt. 6: 16 – 18
- f. Jesus tells us to lay up “*treasures in heaven*”, NOT upon the earth – Matt. 6: 19 – 21.
- g. Jesus used the rich young ruler to teach us that men would love the material more than eternal life – Mk. 10:17 – 22; 10: 23 – 27.
- h. Jesus used the Rich man and Lazarus to teach us the proper use of material things – Lk. 16: 19 – 31.

II. THE MAN THAT SERVES MAMMON TRANSFERS TO RICHES WHAT BELONGS TO GOD.

- a. We are to love God with all our being – Matt. 22:37; I Tim. 6:10.
- b. We are to seek His Kingdom first – Matt. 6:33; I Tim. 6:9.
- c. We are to Trust God – Psa. 31:1; I Tim. 6:17.
- d. We are to rejoice in the Lord – Phil. 4:4; Lk. 12:19.
- e. We are to labor in the work of the Lord – I Cor. 15:58
- f. Our entire devotion is to be to God – Matt. 6:24.
- g. The server of Mammon is an Idolater – Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5.

III. THE SERVICE OF MAMMON HAS WEAKENED THE CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

- a. We have sacrificed our Children for THINGS:
 - i. The workaholic Father has given his children MAMMON, but he has NOT given them what is important – Himself, The Lord, and Their Salvation.
 - ii. The Working Mother has given her family more THINGS and STUFF—but she has robbed them of the important things – Herself, Proper Teaching, and Security.
- b. We have sacrificed the Salvation of our Neighbors for more things:
 - i. We don't have time to visit and teach a neighbor.
 - ii. "I have got to make a living" – working two or three jobs.
- c. We have sacrificed the Work of the Church:
 - i. Nobody has time to do it – we are serving Mammon and having a good time with our money.
 - ii. When we are not working, we must go somewhere and spend part of what we have made.
 - iii. Many are too busy with Mammon to teach – they don't have time you know . . .
 - iv. We are attending gospel meetings, we are serving mammon.
- d. We have sacrificed ASSOCIATION WITH OUR BRETHREN:
 - i. We have no time to be with one another.
 - ii. Acts 2:46.
- e. We have sacrificed BABIES for mammon:
 - i. Many young couples are so selfish, wanting so many material things, they sacrifice having babies for cars and houses.
 - ii. I Tim. 5:14; Tit. 2:4; I Tim. 2:15.
- f. We have sacrificed ELDERSHIPS for mammon:
 - i. Many men have been so caught up with mammon, they have not raised their children to be Christians, and have not studied and prepared themselves to serve as elders.
 - ii. There is a great shortage of eldership material across the land, and it goes back to MAMMON.

CONCLUSION

What is the answer to this problem of Materialism??

1. We all need to learn what Jesus said: "*For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth*" – Luke. 12:15.
2. We must learn to be rich toward God – Luke 12: 21:
 - a. This is done by laying up treasures in heaven – Matt. 6:20.
 - b. By letting Mammon serve us – Lk. 16: 9 – 12; I Tim. 6: 17 – 19.
3. By learning to Trust in God – Matt. 6: 25 – 34; Heb. 13: 5.
4. By seeking FIRST the Kingdom of God – Matt. 6:33.

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