

# DAY 30 MONEY



## Matthew 6:24

*"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."*

I would imagine that when I mentioned the word of the day is "money," that you had a few different reactions. Maybe stress or anxiety. Maybe it brought concerns as to why we would even bring it up in something like Common Prayer. But whatever your reaction is, money is a touchy subject. It plays a massive part in

our personal and social lives, and we can find it difficult to talk openly about how our faith relates to our money. But nonetheless, it is an important subject.

Once again, we find our reading for the day in the middle of the Sermon on the Mount. And the Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' most famous teaching. In Matthew's gospel, it immediately follows the announcement of the Kingdom of God. Jesus proclaims the availability of the Kingdom of God, and then he goes on for three chapters to give his manifesto, his teaching on how to practically live into the Kingdom of God here-and-now.

For many of us, we find ourselves stuck in secret and hidden financial obsessions. This leads us to feel like our money, and our relationship to our money is divorced from the conversations of our faith. But ultimately, this separation is a result of failing to recognize the totalizing nature of the exclusive Christian claim that Jesus is Lord. Because if Jesus is, in fact, Lord, then he is Lord over everything. And as we learn to live into the reality that Jesus is, in fact, Lord means that we are learning to turn every aspect of who we are over to Jesus, living in light of who he is and how he would have us live.

This tension between Jesus as Lord and our own claims to Lordship over our lives is often the cause of our relegating money-talk to some other realm than faith. This is why Jesus' continual discussion of money is in such contrast to our reticence and reserve. Jesus often talks openly about money and possessions.

And his message is similarly blunt. He warns against the spiritual dangers of making money a god, and he also makes it clear that a wise use of our material possessions can enhance our relationship with God.

It is all too easy to center and elevate money and possessions as to the focal point of our existence. Jesus challenges us to dethrone money as a rival god. Money has a propensity to rise in our lives to the level of god-like status, demanding our allegiance above all and sacrifice above all. Jesus will continue to challenge this over and over. And it is because of this consuming nature of money that Jesus is seeking to dethrone it from the center of our lives.

It was Martin Luther who once observed: "There are three conversions necessary: the conversion of the heart, mind, and the purse." Of these three, the last conversion proves the most difficult."

But there is freedom in dethroning money from the position of centrality.

### Daily Practice

To express your intentions to dethrone money and to put God first in your life, bless someone today with an anonymous monetary gift. Maybe buy someone coffee. Or sending them a treat through DoorDash Or, this morning, pull out some money from the ATM with the intent to give it away; as you go about your day and feel led, give it away to someone in need.

The below reflections are written by congregants & staff of CPC. All reflections are following Trevor Hudson's book Pauses for Lent and are both heavily influenced and borrowed from his work. Any quotes without attribution should be credited to him.