

# Dethroning Mammon

Intro/Matthew 13:45-46



“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.”

Matthew 13:45-46

Mammon- wealth regarded as an evil influence or false object of worship and devotion.

The image on the cover of the book depicts this parable; a savvy merchant breaks all known advice and spends all he has to buy a most treasured and unique pearl. Traditional interpretation says that we are the merchants and the pearl is heaven, Welby considers the point of view that the merchant is God. We are the precious pearl and Jesus is the sacrifice God made to have us. How does that make you feel? To be something so treasured by God that he sacrificed everything to have you?

As we dive into this series, ponder this image and consider what you would sacrifice for what you value most. Is the sacrifice worth the prize? Is what you value most, worth giving up everything you have for? Are you treasuring Mammon or God?

## Sermon Series Schedule

Week Of	Chapter/Bible Passage
February 18 <sup>th</sup> / 1 <sup>st</sup> of Lent	Ch.1 “What we see we value”/ John 11
February 25 <sup>th</sup> / 2 <sup>nd</sup> of Lent	Ch.2 “What we measure controls us”/ Luke 18:35-19:10
March 4 <sup>th</sup> / 3 <sup>rd</sup> of Lent	Ch. 3 “What we have we hold” / John 12
March 11 <sup>th</sup> / Mothering Sunday	Ch. 4 “What we receive we treat as ours”/ John 13
March 18 <sup>th</sup> / 5 <sup>th</sup> of Lent	Ch.5 “What we give we gain” / John 19:38-42
<b>3 WEEK GAP-</b> Connect Groups free to do Ch. 6 ahead of sermon series	

April 8<sup>th</sup>/ 2<sup>nd</sup> of Easter

Ch.6 “What we measure brings us joy” / Rev 3:14-22; vv18

Ch 1 “What we see, we Value” John 11, James 2:1-7



“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.’”

John 11:25-26

1. There are many people in this passage and they all react differently to the events that unfold. How do the following people react to Lazarus’ death/resurrection? What do their reactions say about what they value?
  - a. The disciples
  - b. Martha and Mary
  - c. The Pharisees
  - d. Jesus
2. In today’s culture, how do we define a “successful” or “valuable” life? What qualities do we look for in a person that marks them as “successful” or “valuable”?
3. How do you think Jesus would define a “successful” or “valuable” person?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31. What worth does Jesus put on you? Do you need to do anything to earn this?
5. Welby says “Mammon lies by distorting our vision, while God brings truth and perception into our lives.” Can you think of an example in your own life where you allowed your opinion to be coloured by what was culturally acceptable?
6. Read James 2:6-7. These words were written so long ago, and yet they could be talking about our world as it is today. Can you think of any examples, either from your own life or the news, where these words ring true?

**Leaders-** These quotes from the chapter could be great spring boards for extra discussion.

- “Many of us will recognize the statement by the Brazilian Archbishop Hélder Câmara, who said, ‘When I feed the poor they call me a saint; when I ask why they are poor, they call me a communist.’” What do you think Câmara means by this? Does it change how you look at those in need?

- “To see the world as God sees it is to see huge beauty in every person, and the infinite provision of God that can come through us. But it is also to see a life in which my autonomy, my control over what I want and what I do, my desire to ration my love rather than let it flow out abundantly... has to be surrendered to the God of abundance and grace.” How can seeing the world as Jesus sees it make us vulnerable? How can God use this vulnerability to his glory?