

**A BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF MATTHEW 6:19-34 TO CLARIFY  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE AND MONEY**

by

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*The opinions expressed in this [thesis/dissertation] do not necessarily reflect the views of the South African Theological Seminary.*

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby acknowledge that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted to any academic institution for degree purposes.

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17 August 2011

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## **SUMMARY**

This thesis conducts a biblical-theological analysis of Matthew 6:19-34. The main problem is to clarify what this passage of scripture teaches about the relationship between the Christian disciple and money. Matthew 6:19-34 is found within the discourse known as the Sermon on the Mount. By interacting with the various views on how the Sermon on the Mount is to be read this thesis settles on the opinion that the Sermon is addressed primarily to Christian disciples with the expectation that its demand can and should be met by the disciple.

An analysis of the historical and literary contexts of the text is conducted as well as an analysis of the major theological motifs found within the text. By conducting a synthesis of these findings it is shown that Jesus presents money as a rival god that challenges for allegiance that rightly belongs to God. Jesus also draws attention to the way this allegiance to God can be expressed.

The findings show that money and God are radically different gods. There are significantly different consequences to the believer that result from obedience to either money or God. Discipleship will be shown to be a discipline that is a community affair, and thus the consequences of allegiance to God or money are to be understood in how one's stewardship of money affects the community.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Matthew 6:19-34 forms a coherent unit within the first of the five major discourses found in Matthew. This first discourse in Matthew is famously known as the Sermon on the Mount (=SOM). A reading of the SOM can be confusing. While believers today remain captivated by the SOM, its pertinence for the believing community remains somewhat elusive and perhaps misunderstood. To further aggravate the attempt to understand this infamous sermon, the fact exists that of all the Sermons in the history of the world, this one has been given the most attention. Ergo there is a maze of scholarly literature available. This doesn't necessarily help in a believer's quest to grasp its content.

Of all the approaches to the interpretation of the Sermon there are several main views which stand out as the most significant. Firstly, there is the view that says the SOM cannot be followed. Allison (2005:127) believes the sermon puts out what looks like impossible demands, for example Matthew 5:48 asks sinful people to be perfect. Justin Martyr said, "I am aware that your precepts in the Gospel are so wonderful and so great, that I suspect no-one can keep them; for I have carefully read them." According to Allison, Karl Barth and Eduard Thurneysen both saw the Sermon on the Mount as a self portrait of Jesus, i.e. it was something Christ alone could embody and practice.

Amongst those who believe the SOM cannot be followed there is the typical Lutheran view (Blomberg 1992: 94; Carson 1994: 165; McArthur 1978:17). This view sees the SOM as something like the law; something which shows up human

sinfulness and pushes people towards Christ as saviour. The Sermon would be what Robert Frost called a “beautiful impossibility.” This view does not take seriously an exegesis of the text (Carson 1994: 165). While the demands of the SOM may bring to light a person’s need for salvation, the Sermon is presented as one of five discourses in Matthew which followers of Christ can, and are expected to, obey (Hendrickx 1984:6; Mtt 28:19-20). The argument for the SOM as a sermon expected to be obeyed by Christian disciples will be expanded below when the chosen approach to interpreting the SOM is expanded.

Secondly, the sermon is seen as apocalyptic and therefore as containing some sort of temporary ethical demands (Blomberg 1992:94; Carson 1994:163; Pelikan 2001:45). Johannes Weiss is credited as being one of the main proponents of this view. Weiss (1971:84) asked the question as to when Christ’s second coming would be. He proposed that understanding what Jesus taught about the second coming only made sense if Jesus believed He would return within the lifetime of the people among whom He worked (p.91). This view essentially states that Jesus was incorrect in his thinking (Blomberg 1992: 94; Carson 1994: 163; Pelikan 2001:45).

Jesus thought that the world was about to end and so he was advocating a radical interim ethic to be practiced right before the end of the world and the consummation of His Kingdom (Carson 1994:163; Pelikan 2001:45). Thus the SOM is not something for all people in all times. Other than the fact that this view doesn’t take what the rest of scripture teaches to be true of Christ (i.e. Christ wouldn’t have been incorrect in his thinking), this view also ignores the tone of Christ’s sermon by missing the fact that the sermon was recorded in Matthew after the death of Christ with the expectation that it be followed by believers to whom the book was being addressed (Matt 28:28-30).

Thirdly, there is a dispensational view of the Sermon. This view says the Sermon will be applicable in the future during Christ’s millennial reign, but is not relevant for now (Blomberg 1992:94; Carson 1994:167; Chafer 1976:98; Lloyd-Jones 2006:18). Chafer (1976:98), a well known Dispensationalist, believes that the Bible contains three sets of rules for human behaviour; one set for a past age, one for this present

age, and then the SOM which is the set of rules for a future age. This view will not work as clearly Jesus expects the sermon to be lived out in a sinful society, not in a perfect millennial reign (Carson 1994: 169). For example, the SOM ends with a challenge to put human sinfulness aside by not only hearing but also obeying the teachings of Christ (Matt 7: 24-27).

Fourthly, it is seen as a sermon with an ideal social or liberal agenda; Kissinger (1975:40) says that this view is held together less by a specific set of doctrines and more by common ideas, amongst which are social idealism and a positive attitude towards humankind and what humans can achieve. The sermon need just be applied and there will be a perfect peaceful society here on earth (Blomberg 1992: 94; Carson 1994:165-166; Lloyd-Jones 2006:17-18). This view holds little weight today; the two world wars disqualified the validity of its claims and it overlooked the essential nature of the human being, i.e. humans need God's help to live out His demands.

Fifth, the Anabaptist approach. This approach advocates a literal living out of the SOM in the private and civic arena (Blomberg 1992: 94; Carson 1994:165). One of the more well known bi-products is that this approach promotes pacifism (Blomberg 1992: 94). The down side of this approach is that it doesn't take seriously that the SOM is not meant to be the final word on all the matters it touches on (Carson 1994:164-165). There are other factors to consider, for example, the teaching style of Jesus and the teachings of the rest of the Bible.

The view favoured in this thesis would be as follows; The Sermon's place in Matthew promotes it as the teachings of Christ showing Christian disciples what it is like to live as citizens of His Kingdom under His reign. Teachings which can and should be adhered to by all believers, in all places, through all ages. Matthew 28:16-20 is considered to be the key to understanding Matthew, as it relates to the five discourses in Matthew (Hendrickx 1984:6). Matthew 28:16-20 is that passage of scripture which commands Jesus' followers to go and make disciples and teach them to obey what He has taught.

The implication then is that the Sermon on the Mount, being one of the five

discourses in Matthew, is meant to be applied by believers. Like Carson (1994:166-167) argues, it is acknowledged that conformity to the sermon is expected now, even if perfection will not be achieved until the consummation of Christ's Kingdom. The Sermon is addressed to, and expected to be practiced by the Christian Community (Hendrickx 1984:8; Lloyd-Jones 2006:20). The sermon is meant for the Christian (Lloyd-Jones 2006:20).

The work of the exegete is to find out what it is that Jesus taught, and, importantly, what is the implication for the Christian disciple? With this in mind, attention is turned to the passage in question, Matthew 6:19-34. Even when settled on the chosen approach of interpretation to the SOM, there are several factors which make understanding what Jesus taught in this passage difficult.

First, today's readers are far removed from the historical context which would have shaped the teaching of the passage. To grasp the passage the historical setting of the text and its origin needs to be examined. I.e. we ask the question how the historical setting of the original hearers of the Sermon would affect their understanding of the Sermon.

Second, following the structure and rhetoric of the passage is not easy. For example, it looks as if Jesus is saying that money is primarily a moral issue and not an economic issue. Further, at times it looks like Jesus is advocating that the disciple should put good sense aside in order to trust God (Carlston 1987:179). It even looks as if the passage suggests work is a bad idea. If that is so, how does the believer reconcile Bible stories such as Joseph who prudently worked in order to avert a famine?

Third, the passage contains and is surrounded by theological motifs and themes in Matthew. These theological themes and motifs contained in Matthew will affect the understanding of the passage.

Thus, to read Matthew 6:19-34 in order to understand the nature of the relationship between the Christian disciple and money, a biblical and theological analysis is necessary.

## 1.2 Problem

The main problem this thesis aims to address is as follows; based on a biblical and theological analysis of Matthew 6:19-34, what is the nature of the relationship between the Christian disciple and money? To answer the above mentioned problem the following questions need to be addressed:

- a) What light does an examination of the historical context of Matthew 6:19-34 shed on the meaning of the passage?
- b) What does a literary analysis of Matthew 6:19-34 clarify about the meaning of the passage?
- c) What does an examination of the theological motifs and themes in Matthew 6:19-34 contribute to an overall understanding of the passage?
- d) Based on the relevant historical, literary, and theological information pertaining to Matthew 6:19-34, what should the Christian disciple's view of money be?

## 1.3 Purpose

Firstly, there will always be pastoral value in addressing the relationship between the Christian disciple and money. The words of the Apostle Paul (1 Tim 6:10: NKJV – *From here on in unless stated otherwise all scripture quotations will come from the NKJV*) have proved true more than once, “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” Thus by showing what is at stake in the Christian disciple's relationship to money, the hope is that the thesis will encourage greater allegiance to Christ.

Secondly, by clarifying what is taught about the relationship between the Christian disciple and money in the SOM, it could help clarify some confusion which the believing community has in its reading of the Sermon. I.e. the hermeneutical principles applied in this thesis will assist in reading the rest of the Sermon.

Thirdly, it is clear that the Gospel writers felt that the relationship between the

Christian disciple and money was an important one that needed to be addressed in their generation and in generations to come (Schmidt 1988:171). This is attested to by the fact that over twenty percent of Jesus parables refer to the relationship between the disciple and wealth. “The subject accounts for just over ten percent of the total content of Luke and about five percent each of Mark and Matthew.”

Finally, the many years of attention given to the Sermon by the church, world and theologians testifies that the richness of this biblical well seems to be too deep to get the bottom. So while the approach to interpretation may not be new, there is always on-going value in exegesis of the text.

#### **1.4 Hypothesis**

A biblical-theological analysis of Matthew 6:19-34 will show that money is presented as a god that daily challenges the Christian disciple’s allegiance to Christ. Furthermore, the passage will teach that choosing to serve money leads to a degenerate experience for the disciple, while choosing to serve Christ will bring to the disciple a liberating experience in the present, and a rewarding experience in the future.

#### **1.5 Design and Methodology**

To solve the main problem, there will firstly be an exploration of the historical context of the passage in question. The goal will be to see how the historical context will affect the understanding of the passage. An examination of the historical context aims largely at two tasks; firstly, to find the occasion that brought about the writing of the book (Lategan 2009: 65; Smith 2008:172). To embark on an exegesis of the NT, attention must be paid to the religious, cultural and sociological context of the origin of the text (Lategan 2009:65). The second task is to find the purpose of the book (Lategan 2009: 65; Smith 2008:172).

Secondly, a literary analysis of the passage will be conducted. Attention will be paid to the structure and rhetoric of the text, as both will affect the understanding of the passage (Smith 2008: 172-173). Other literary features that may affect the meaning

of the passage and which will also be examined include the genre, composition, grammar and textual variants.

Thirdly, there will be an exploration of the theological themes and motifs of the passage in order to examine how they will shed light on the understanding of the passage.

Fourthly, there will be synthesis of the findings, i.e. in light of the historical, literary and theological analysis from the passage, there will be an attempt to examine what Matthew 6:19-34 teaches about what the Christian disciple's view on money should be.

Finally, there will be a brief summary of the research and an assessment of the hypothesis. The theological and practical significance of the findings for the Christian disciple will be noted, as exegesis will not be considered complete until there is relevance for today's believers (Lategan 2009: 107; Smith 2008: 176).

The research will be literary in nature. The approach to exegesis will run in the traditional historical-grammatical vein. Standard methodological tools used in conceptual arguments will be applied throughout the thesis, for example synthetic, comparative, dialogical, polemical and comparative arguments (Smith 2008:159).

## **1.6 Presuppositions**

As is appropriate for a theological research paper, the assumptions of this student's approach to the scriptures will now be stated.

- a) This thesis will accept the inerrancy of the scriptures. To clarify further, this implies that the Bible in its original text will always prove to be correct in all matters relating to truth. Thus the scholar who approaches the Bible can expect no contradiction in matters pertaining to truth
- b) A historically veracious reading of the NT text will also be assumed and so an understanding of the customs, world view and events raised within the passage needs to be examined. I.e. events, ideas and customs found in the

NT text actually did occur and did exist: they were not re-created nor re-invented by later authors.

- c) While the Bible was written and compiled by people, God was involved in the process in order to “ensure the intended message is faithfully communicated in writing (Smith 2008:170).”
- d) The exegete wants to find the truth taught in a passage of scripture. The text under study can only have “one correct interpretation (Smith 2008:170).” There may be several applications made to the truth taught in a passage of scripture (Smith 2008:170).
- e) The Bible is authoritative in that it is an “expression of God’s will for His creation (Lioy 2004:11-12).” Thus it has the final say on all matters of belief and practice over all entities in the universe.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

As mentioned in the previous chapter there needs to be an examination of the historical context in order to understand how the original readers would have understood the teachings of Matthew 6:19-34. In order to uncover the historical context of Matthew this chapter will accomplish two tasks:

Firstly, to conduct a historical analysis of the text there would need to be an exploration of the religious, cultural and sociological context of the origin of the text (Lategan 2009:65). Secondly, there would need to be an exploration of the purpose of Matthew (Lategan 2009:65; Smith 2008:172). The outcome of both tasks both tasks will have pertinence to the chosen area of study.

#### **2.2 Date**

There is no manuscript evidence which details exactly when Matthew was written (Carter 2000:16). The most common suggestion is that it was written somewhere around 80-90 A.D. (Carter 2000:16). Much of the argument as to when Matthew was written depends on relative dating. It is generally accepted that Matthew used Mark as a source, and Mark is thought to be written around 60-70 A.D. (Carter 2000:16; DeSilva 2004:238).

If Matthew was dependent on Mark, and Mark was written around 65 A.D. then scholars suggest several years for Mark to have become known enough for Matthew

to have used it as a source (France 1989:83). It is likely that both Ignatius and the Didache referred to Matthew's Gospel, meaning this gospel could not have been written after 100 A.D. (Senior 1997:81).

Carter (2000:916) notes that Matthew referring to the destruction of the temple proves the book must be written after 70 A.D. as Matthew gives a theological interpretation of why the events happened. The orientation of Matthew towards a church community and the debate Matthew's Gospel projects against the Pharisees, suggests that Matthew aims to define the church community as separate to a Pharisaic tradition (Johnson 1999:191). The Pharisaic movement is thought to become dominant after the fall of the Temple in 70AD.

However, the 80-90 A.D. dating view, while common, does not necessarily stand up to reason (DeSilva 2004:238). The reasons for this are as follows: Firstly, there were tensions between the Jewish community and the Christian Jewish community right after the time of Christ's ascension. Thus it does not follow that it was written after 70AD during the rise of the Pharisaic tradition. Secondly, Matthew's reference to the destruction of Jerusalem could well be attributed to prophecy (France 2009: 906).

One could argue that the prophecies make a strong case for a dating before 70 A.D; as (if the prophecies were already fulfilled) one would think there would be some references to the fulfillment of these prophecies (France 1989:85). There are also references in Matthew's Gospel that suggest that the temple was still in tact.

Furthermore, while modern scholars generally accepted that Mark was written around 65 A.D. this in fact may not be true (France 1989:82-83). The early church's belief that Matthew was written first would place the Gospel in the early 60's. Irenaeus dates the Gospel in the early 60's, and there seems to be nothing available to contradict his belief (France 1989:88).

### **2.3 Authorship**

The Early church believed that the Gospel was written by the apostle Matthew (France 1989:77). The Orthodox Protestant view holds the same (Lioy 2004:11-12).

This view is largely rejected by modern scholars for two reasons. Firstly most modern scholars assume a dating too late to be written by Mathew (France 1989:77). Secondly, it is assumed that the Gospel is something other than a follower of Christ from Galilee would have fashioned.

Davies (1993:1) would fall into the camp of scholars who believe the apostle Matthew did not write the gospel in question. He believes that the Gospel was attributed to Matthew as author only late in the second century and for the purpose of apostolic authority. He also says that there is no external evidence for believing Matthew wrote the Gospel that bears his name.

However, as noted in section 2.1, such a late dating may not be the case. Further, the move to a late dating and thus a move away from Matthew as author is based on the assumption that the book could not have been written by an eye witness of the events (Derickson 2003:87). However, the early church Fathers all attributed the work to Matthew (p.97). These men were decent scholars who would have based their belief on “widespread testimony and not isolated personal theories.”

France (1989:79) believes that it is reasonable to accept Matthew as the author as there are factors in the text that would reflect the work of the “tax-collector apostle.” While it cannot be proved, there is also no reason to believe that the early church merely guessed that Matthew was the author or that it was a pseudonym (p.78). Thus, it can be reasonably assumed that the apostle Matthew is the author of the gospel.

Of interest to the main problem of this thesis is that “Matthew was a tax collector, who left everything in his life for Jesus (Green 2000:25).” The significance of Matthew as a tax collector and the consequent standing in the Jewish community will be in other areas of this thesis.

## **2.4 Origin**

### **2.4.1 Matthew’s community**

The attempt to find out who the original readers of Matthew were, is difficult. There is

almost no evidence outside of the New Testament text to suggest who they could have been (Long 1997:1). The text itself offers little help in uncovering their identity. The best one can do is to make an “educated guess.”

The traditional view is that the Gospel originated in Palestine (Guthrie 1976:28). The Jewish emphasis of the text makes a case for a Jewish-Christian Community. Thus it is assumed that Matthew was written where a significant number of Jews in Palestine were living (France 1989:91).

Matthew’s primary audience would be Jewish Christians (Keener 1999:49; Long 1997:2). This view is common to scholars and widely accepted based on the amount of Jewish specific and OT references found in the Gospel of Matthew. This however does not mean that Gentile Christians are excluded but rather that Gentiles would have realised they were adopting a Jewish faith (Keener 1999:49). There is some evidence in the text of Gentile Christians being addressed (Wilkins 2001:39).

Written to a primarily Jewish Christian Audience, it is doubtful that the audience was still active in synagogue life, as the gospel refers to synagogues as “their synagogues” and often paints Jewish religious authorities in a negative light (Long 1997:2). This could be because they had walked out of participating in synagogue life or that they were forced out. As people with a Jewish heritage the ergonomics of their worship life would have been shaped around the synagogue.

Being outside of the synagogue would have left these Jewish Christians working out the tension of being away from their Jewish heritage and working out life as Christians (Long 1997:2). Long poses the question they would have asked well, ‘How do we incorporate our Jewish customs and legacy into the new reality of the Christian faith?’ Thus pertinence for this thesis is that it would have been a community largely Jewish, and as such, rooted in OT and Jewish Tradition.

#### **2.4.2 Matthew’s Geographical Location**

The suggested sites of Matthew’s origin include Jerusalem, Palestine, Caesarea Maritima, Phoenicia and Alexandria (Davies & Allison 1998:138). At this point it

cannot be said where exactly Matthew originated. The most common view is that Matthew originated in Syria, and perhaps in Antioch (Allison 2005:xiii; Keck 2005:48; Long 1997:3). Antioch is the most common suggestion, because of the “prominence of that city in the early church (Leske 1998:1255).” Antioch was a fairly large city and was occupied by a cosmopolitan mix of people (Long 1997:3).

The early church Fathers’ said Matthew was more likely written in a Palestinian setting (Leske 1998:1255). This would probably have been in Galilee, as the anti-pharisaic tone of the book would be somewhere where the Pharisees were prominent. However, Leske acknowledges that Antioch, which is much further north, is still a possible alternative. Those who argue for Palestine are in the camp of scholars who argue for a dating of Matthew before 70 A.D. Those who assume a late dating will find a Palestinian origin hard to accept (Davies & Allison 1998: 140).

Even though scholars are unable to settle on Matthew’s place on origin, what is consistent is that scholars believe the church was probably located in a prosperous urban area (Long 1997:2). As Green (2000:37) notes, a great city must have embraced Matthew in order to account for its popularity in antiquity.

### **2.4.3 Jesus Context**

While it was noted that finding the original audience of Matthew is difficult, the text does give the reader information about the context of the original hearers of the Sermon. Further, as this thesis is assuming that the apostle Matthew is the author, it could be that some of the original hearers of the Sermon would have heard or read Matthew’s Gospel.

#### **2.4.3.1 Audience**

The question has been asked as to whom the SOM was sermon addressed. Matthew 5:1-2 tells the reader that Jesus, after seeing the crowds, ascended the mountain and that Jesus’ disciples went to him and he began to teach them. However when the Sermon ends the author mentions that the crowds were amazed at Jesus’ teaching (Mtt. 7:28). I.e. there were both crowds and disciples being

addressed.

Jesus says things in the Sermon that clearly can only be for His disciples: for example telling them they are the salt of the Earth (Ervast 1983:12). The question is then how Matthew 7:28 is reconciled with the Sermon being addressed to the disciples, as in 7:28 the reader is told that the crowds were amazed at the Sermon (p.13)?

Several suggestions have been put forward. For Ervast (1983:15) it is not either or, but the SOM is addressed to both the disciples and the crowd. Senior (1997:102) sums up his position by affirming that “Matthew conceives of the Sermon as addressed through them to the crowds.” It is not however necessary to reconcile Matthew 5:1-2 to 7:28.

Clearly Matthew 5:1-2 tells the reader that Jesus is addressing the Sermon to disciples and Matthew 28:20 drives the point home that the discourses found in Matthew are for training in discipleship. The fact that the crowds heard, does not mean that they were in any way the intended recipients. So while he may have addressed the crowds and the disciples, the disciples were the intended recipients.

#### **2.4.3.2 Location**

Matthew 5:1 teaches that Jesus went up on a mountainside to teach the SOM. The Greek noun has been translated as mountain in the NKJV. It could also be translated as hill or mountain range (Lioy 2004:90-91). While there are several suggestions as to where the SOM was preached, “...the exact location where Jesus taught His Sermon remains uncertain.”

Lioy (2004:90-91) highlights three possible reasons as to why the SOM was proclaimed on a mountain;

- a) Speaking on a mountainside would have acoustic value, in that Jesus voice would have carried well.
- b) Going up the mountain could give the listener the feel that they are in an

environment outside of the normal everyday happenings.

- c) It could create a direct link to Moses who received the Law on a Mountain. Further exploration of the link between Moses and Jesus in the SOM will follow.

#### **2.4.3.3 Economic Climate**

Galilee was a 'monitised economy' that had strong trade links and a thriving trade within itself (Esler 1995:41). In Jesus' context the use of money was common place for all classes of people, from the poorest of society to the wealthy. By the time of the SOM there was enough financial education for people to be aware of concepts like "maximizing resources," "keeping production costs low," as well as "manipulating demand to keep prices high."

The original audience of the SOM, as well as the community to whom the Gospel was originally addressed, were people who were ruled by the Roman Empire (Carter 2001:1). The Jews were living under a pagan "superpower (Wenham and Walton 2001: 21)." In Jesus' context Rome was, "militarily powerful, culturally vibrant, rich and pagan." For the Jewish community Rome would have been seen as yet another idol worshipping oppressor who YHWH would eventually repay for their wickedness (Wright 1992:159).

However the Roman way of life worked to the interest of some in the Jewish community, for example, the high priestly families as well as the tax collectors (Wenham and Walton 2001:21). In Matthew's gospel Jesus is often seen in confrontation with religious leaders. This would not be over what modern-day society we would label as only a religious matter (Carter 2001: 35).

The religious leaders would have been part of the elite that maintained the status quo in order to keep the Roman societal structures in place (Carter 2001:35). Their conflicts with Jesus would have had, "social, political and economic dimensions as well." These confrontations would be to the religious leaders, an assault on their wealth, amongst other things.

The Jewish community was taxed very hard, and there was a large gap between the rich and the poor (Wenham and Walton 2001:21). There would have been a middle class, but nominal in size (Davids 1992:702). People were taxed as individuals, on their goods, and they had to pay the temple tax (Wenham and Walton 2001:121). There was also the feeling that as difficult as things already were, the Romans might have become less kind than they were.

The Tax collectors were known to “raise the dues required by the Romans (Green 2000: 25).” Due to the habit of exploiting fellow Jews the Tax collectors were outcasts in the Jewish communities. As Green notes, they were excluded from the synagogues, were classed in the same category as murderers, and generally hated as “social pariahs.”

There was fixed tax which percentage was known by the tax payer and then there was tax on imports, exports, customs and transport (Green 2000:25). It was in the later types of tax where there was no fixed percentage that Tax Collectors were known to take advantage of and exploit people. Matthew, a tax collector, whose place of operation was a lucrative one (Green 2000:25). He operated out of Capernaum which was on a “main road from Damascus to Egypt, which passed through Samaria and Galilee.” I.e. He collected tax in a thriving trade route. Matthew worked under the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas who made significantly large amounts of tax payments to Rome.

In Addition to the high priestly clans, there were three other groups of Jewish people who in 1<sup>st</sup> century Palestine would have been considered wealthy (Davids 1992:701-702). Firstly the Herodians were known to have possessed considerable amounts of land. To be considered as the top tier of wealthy one would have to own land. The Herodians carried political power and in turn turned that political power into wealth. Secondly, there were wealthy families in the “Older Jewish Aristocracy” and “individuals who had become rich through trade (Davids 1992:.702).” An example would be people who acquired wealth through earnings as a tax collector. Thirdly, there would have been prosperous Merchants.

The land owners made money off renting the land to farmers who were often

exploited by the land owners (Davids 1992:702). Both Merchants and Land owners developed reputations for exploiting poor farm workers, thus in the AD 70 Jewish revolt the debt records were burned. The poor were made up of a mixture of people who had no skills and owned no land, (Davids 1992:702). Included in this group of people were carpenters, farm workers and fishermen. However, just because some had such a trade they could have still risen in social standing if the trade was successful. Jesus family at the time of his birth was poor, this seen by the fact his parents offered the sacrifices of poor people in Luke 2:24. But it could be that their business in Galilee may have been successful in which case at best, they would have achieved a modest level of existence.

Jesus himself did not own any land (Davids 1992:704). This is seen in Matthew 8:20 where Jesus remarks that he has no place to lay his head. He was not officially or formally affiliated as a teacher. Further his disciples were a 'ragtag' bunch. Thus Mark 6:3 shows that in Nazareth there was a negative response to him as people knew his social standing. Jesus had a reputation for associating with the poor and the outcasts of society.

There was a view held by some in Jesus time that "material riches were a sign of God's favour," and that to be poor was a sign of God's displeasure (Lioy 2004:166-167). This attitude and world view would have been contrary to the teaching of the tenth commandment (p.167). Further the scriptures teach that Jesus (whose life did please God) was not considered wealthy.

Matthew 8:20 tells us that Jesus lived a simple life free of the concern of possessions (Keener 1999:230). Such a stance on life the Greco-roman world may well have respected but would have found extreme and unnecessary. There were cynic philosophers like Plato who taught about the worthlessness of wealth. While there were differing views on wealth in the Greco-Roman world, the predominant view would be to acquire as much personal wealth as possible.

## **2.5 Purpose**

There are several ways scholars attempt to uncover the purpose of this book. Firstly,

finding the origin and purpose of Matthew are not mutually exclusive. As Guthrie (1976:26) notes, the purpose needs to be understood in light of the historical occasion that brought about the writing of the book.

Secondly, scholars will infer the purpose from the content and structure of the book (Guthrie 1976:26). They will also infer the purpose by paying attention to the most obviously emphasised themes in Matthew (Drane 2001:205). It is quite plausible that Matthew may have had more than just one purpose in mind when writing his Gospel (Blomberg 1992:34). The main suggestions as to what purpose Matthew wrote will now be examined.

### **2.5.1 Matthew as Liturgy and Catechism**

G.D. Kilpatrick is a proponent of the view which says Matthew is a rework of liturgical material (Guthrie 1976:26). Should one adopt this view then Matthew has the purpose of putting liturgical material into a “more permanent form.”

There are features in the writing style of Matthew that support such a liturgical hypothesis, for example Matthew is well structured for easy memorisation (Keck 2005:34). However these language features do not need such a hypothesis to justify their place in the text (Guthrie 1976:27). It could be that the writing style of the author leads to the liturgical use of the material.

The large amount of teaching material in Matthew shows it is clearly written to give guidance to Matthew’s church (Johnson 1999:187). A liturgical use of the text (whether it was an intended purpose or bi-product of writing style), brings home how geared towards a church community was Matthew’s intent was (p. 191).

Green (2000:28) believes it is probable that Matthew was written for Christian teachers/catechists. The rate of literacy was not high in Matthew’s day, and so he may well have composed his Gospel for teachers to use in Catechism. Green argues this point by pointing out the Church in her early form adopted much of the teaching structure from Judaism.

Christian elders would be the replacement for the elders of the synagogue and in the

same way the Christian community would look to Christian teachers of the law to do what their OT “counterparts” did (Green 2000:28). Thus Green believes it likely that Matthew may have been a manual for Christian Scribes.

Guthrie (1976:28) suggested that the idea of Matthew having a Catechetical purpose could be entertained; he believes that while it cannot be established that a catechetical purpose is present in Matthew, Matthew would suit the Catechetical needs of a congregation.

### **2.5.2 Matthew as Instruction for Discipleship**

The instruction found in the great commission at the end of Matthew makes it obvious that Matthew is meant for instruction in discipleship (Nolland 2005:21). As noted earlier the command to teach disciples relates back to the five discourses of which the SOM is one.

As already mentioned there is correspondence in Matthew of Jesus with Moses. One such corresponding role would be that of a teacher to God’s people, for example the SOM begins with Jesus going up the Mountain and ends with Jesus coming down; this serves to promote Jesus as the New Moses, i.e. amongst other roles as the new teacher of Israel (Achte-meier, Green & Thompson 2001:100).

The SOM discourse must be understood in relation to Jesus’ authoritative position which is outlined in Ch’s 1-4 (Achte-meier et al 2001:101). Matthew 1:1 places Jesus as God’s long expected King who would come to establish God’s rule on earth. In the first four chapters Jesus is seen as obedient to God in getting baptized and is tempted but does not sin (Mtt 3:15; Mtt 4). I.e. Matthew portrays Jesus as the Christ who embodies his own commands, and expects his followers to do the same (Achte-meier et al 2001:101). The theological theme of the person of Christ and it’s pertinence to this thesis will be explored in greater detail in chapter six.

The fact that Matthew is the only Gospel to contain the Greek word for “church” shows the author is concerned with the church community and discipleship (Drane 2001:206). Matthew records a collection of Jesus’ teachings in order to provide

instruction for the believing community. Drane believes that they are provided in an easy to use manner to assist new believers. However it doesn't necessarily follow that easy-to-use material is meant for new believers.

Matthew teaches that discipleship is to be lived out in community. Jesus taught that humans are meant to live their lives individually responsibly before God, but with concern for the social community of which they are a part (Guthrie 1985:153-154). The SOM can at places only make sense if it is acknowledged that humans have a responsibility to each other. In the SOM, "it is assumed without being specifically stated that a person's attitude and actions must take into account his responsibilities in the community."

### **2.5.3 Matthew as a Biography**

Matthew provides details about the person and work of Jesus (Nolland 2005:19). As such Matthew can be viewed as a biography. The organisation of Matthew's material gets the reader to focus primarily on the person Jesus (Green 2000:39). Jesus is always used as a personal name, with the exception of Matthew 1:21.

Biographies written in antiquity by the founders of a school of a philosophy (or by their disciples) have some similarity to the Gospels (Nolland 2005:19). Nolland points out the similarity: "In both cases it is something like a charter document which can provide definition for the movement involved and provide a point of entry for those who might wish to align themselves with the movement." However, while Matthew contains biography, it is not only biography (Green 2000:19). Matthew as a Gospel is essentially a proclamation of the saving work promised in the OT and fulfilled in Jesus. The significance of the saving work of Jesus will be explored further in point 2.2.5.

Nolland (2005:19) argues that the difference between biographies in antiquity and a Gospel is that while both were concerned with the kind of ideal taught, a Gospel is concerned with "who he was." i.e. in Matthew Christology is important. As a result of learning about the person the reader learns about appropriate action in their own world (Humphries-Brooks 1996:4). Matthew's purpose in discipleship was previously

stated. This emphasis on the person of Christ together with a biography providing definition for the movement makes biography helpful in discipleship. Thus strengthening the role Matthew plays in discipleship.

Viewing Matthew as biography can also free the scholar from the quest of finding the identity of Matthew's community. Keener (1999:45) believes that Matthew may not have intended his work to be for a detailed, specific community, but as a biography it is intended for a wider audience.

#### **2.5.4 Matthew as definition for the Christian Movement**

Matthew attempted to help the church distinguish its identity amidst a plethora of philosophical options (Long 1997:2-3). Matthew's church, as already mentioned was probably located in a prosperous urban area where there were both Jews and Gentiles and a variety of worldviews available.

The emphasis placed in Jewish interest and OT references are to be taken into account when considering the purpose of Matthew (Guthrie 1976:25). Matthew attempts to show the pertinence of the Jewish scriptures and more specifically how these scriptures find their fulfillment in Jesus and the church (Keck 2005:38). The orientation of Matthew towards a church community and the debate against the Pharisees suggests that Matthew aims to define the church community as separate to a Pharisaic tradition (Johnson 1999:191).

There is a view that suggests after the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70 a rabbinic movement strengthened (Wright 1992:161). They got organised into a "synod" at Jamnie and excluded Christians. One result is that the question was then posed as to whether the Torah and the Gospel are in fact compatible? While the assumed Mathaen authorship and an earlier dating does dismiss the proposed origin of the question, it is acknowledged that such a question is raised in Matthew.

It seems that the teachings of the Torah and the Christian gospel are in fact compatible (Drane 2001:206). Drane believes the teachings of Christ portray well the continuity with Judaism. Dan Liroy (2004) argues for the continued relevance and

application for God's moral law in the life of the New Testament Church. In fact, Jesus is portrayed as fulfilling the law in its true sense. (Leske 1998:1257).

Torah means the teaching of God (Leske 1998:1257). Teachings which were established in a covenant relationship, the stipulations of which are the Ten Commandments. The Torah was essential to teach God's people how to live in relationship with God and with each other.

The SOM affirms the ongoing validity of the moral law; in the SOM Jesus unpacks the pertinence of the Moral Law for His followers (Lioy 2004:189-193). The Ten Commandments may be viewed as a summary of God's moral law (p.6). Jesus, in the SOM makes reference on several occasions to the Decalogue (pp.6-7). As Lioy (p.187) puts it "...the moral law of God and the nature of it's absolute requirements are of central importance to understanding the overall thrust of Jesus' sermon."

Mosaic Law found in the Old Testament can be divided into three types of law all intended to serve their own specific purpose (Lioy 2004:17-18). The types of law would be political laws as related to Israel's Theocracy, ceremonial laws, and God's moral laws. The ceremonial laws pointed to Jesus who fulfilled the meaning of the laws. Thus followers of Christ no longer have to obey them. God's people no longer live under a theocracy and so the political laws no longer need to be obeyed. It is God's moral laws that have pertinence and are expected to be obeyed by God's people in all times.

### **2.5.5 Matthew as a Gospel to all people**

Jesus is portrayed as not only a Messiah to the Jewish nation, but to the gentile world as well (Drane 2001: 206). This is made obvious by the non Jewish Magi who "pay homage" to Jesus at his birth, and by the great commission of Matthew 28 which commands disciples to take Jesus' message to all nations (p. 207). The point is driven further by the command for disciples to be a light to the nations (Leske 1998: 1253).

The author of Matthew is not content to leave Jesus as an influential figure of the

past, but presents Jesus as a person who becomes a “contemporary” of the reader (Nolland 2005:20). Should a person accept the preached Gospel message they encounter a Jesus who is alive. The Gospel of Matthew as a proclamation of the Christian gospel functions in the same way.

Mark Powell believes the main theme of the plot of Matthew can be found in Matthew 1: 21 (Wright 1992:385). This is the passage of scripture where it is announced that Jesus will save “his (sic) people from their sins.” Matthew needs to be understood in light of how this plot unfolds in the book.

Matthew puts the story he wants to tell against the background of a larger story: that of God’s people in exile because of their sins (Wright 1992: 385-386). Matthew portrays Jesus as a new Moses who will lead God’s people out of exile, i.e. save them from their sins, and lead them into a new covenant through his life, death and resurrection.’

As noted earlier, Jesus is seen as a Moses like figure, except with much more significance than Moses (Wright 1992:388-399). Jesus becomes God in flesh and is with his people as they now possess not just the Promised Land, but the whole world as the Great Commission commands.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has made the case that it can be reasonably assumed that the Gospel of Matthew was written by the tax collector apostle Matthew and has a dating before AD 70. The original readers would then have recognised the teaching found in Matthew 6:19-34 as recorded by one who left a lucrative financial practice in order to live a life of obedience to Christ (Matt.9:9). It is fair to assume that the original readers would have known that Christ could expect as much from His disciples as they digested the teaching of Matthew 6:19-34.

The original audience of the book is unknown, but was written to a majority, while not exclusively Jewish-Christian audience. The Jewish world view of the original hearers of the SOM and the predominantly Jewish world view of the original readers of

Matthew will have continued pertinence throughout this thesis as the examination of the main problem of this thesis continues. It cannot be said where the original audience lived. The most common suggestion is Antioch in Syria.

Jesus addressed the SOM to both the crowds and the disciples. However the disciples were the intended recipients. As a reader and a disciple the reader would have recognised that the teaching at hand carried the expectation of responding in obedience to the teaching.

It is significant that the SOM happened on a mountainside specifically as it creates a parallel to Moses. Jesus in the SOM affirms continuity of the Decalogue given to Moses for the Christian church. Of special interest to this thesis will be the continued relevance of the tenth commandment which instructs God's people to abandon covetousness. Of further significance is that the Decalogue instructs the abandonment of idolatry which is of course of interest to the hypothesis of this thesis.

The economic climate of Jesus day was one where money was in use by all classes of people and there was a fair amount of financial education. There were varying world views surrounding the use of money, and the disposition of people with or without money. The Jewish people were suppressed by a wealthy Roman Empire and exploited by tax collectors. There were also poor people within the Jewish community that would have been exploited by rich land owners. It was to the financial advantage of some Jewish religious figures to maintain the social status quo as instituted by the Roman Empire. Thus Jesus teaching on money was presented to all classes of people.

Several views on the purpose of Matthew were examined, namely Matthew as Liturgy and Catechism, as Instruction for Discipleship, as Biography, as definition for the Christian Movement, and as a gospel to all people. It cannot be said with certainty that Matthew was created with a liturgical or catechistic use in mind, but a liturgical and catechetical use of the book could be a bi-product of the writing style of Matthew.

It was noted that Matthew did have discipleship as a purpose in mind. Further

discipleship in Matthew is related to community as at times obedience to God is lived out in the context of community. The significance of Jesus teaching of wealth within community will be explored in other areas of this thesis.

While Matthew is not exclusively a biography, it does contain biographical elements. Matthew's biographical elements strengthen the argument of Matthew's purpose in discipleship. Biography also serves to remind the reader that the teachings cannot be separated from the person Jesus. It will be shown later in the thesis that Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew not only instructs disciples but impressively embodies His instructions and so the reader is presented with a role model.

Matthew proclaims the gospel for both Jew and Gentile. The proclamation of Jesus leading His people from slavery to sin will carry pertinence in the remainder of this thesis. Matthew's church was faced with the tension of reconciling their Jewish heritage with their new Christian faith. Matthew's affirmation of the continued relevance of the Moral Law shows something of the continuity with the Jewish faith. It is significant in that a couple of the ten commandments have direct relevance to the teachings of Matthew 6:19-34.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Literary Analysis - Structure of the Text**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

As noted in Chapter One a literary analysis needs to be conducted in order to better understand the meaning of the passage, and thus assist in clarifying what Matthew 6:19-34 teaches about the relationship between the Christian disciple and money. The goal of this chapter is to begin the literary analysis of Matthew 6:19-34 by finding a working model for the formal division and subdivisions of the text.

When considering different scholars' viewpoints regarding structure one notes that there is a lot of debate around source criticism and tradition history. It seems likely that much of the debate around what parts of the text belong to which theoretical sources is unlikely to be unresolved.

Further, what the readers have to work with is the text in its final form. It is in this form that it has been presented to the Christian disciple. Thus the approach to identifying the structure of the text will be similar to Lioy (2004:10), who notes that the objective and prudent approach would be to consider the text in its final form. Clearly as it stands in its final form (in the original) it is meant to be read.

It should also be noted from the outset that it is common for scholars to consider Matthew 6:19-34 as part of the larger pericope of Matthew 6:19-7:12. As will be shown there is similarity in structure and in theme between 6:19-34 and 7:1-12. Thus

to identify structure in 6:19-34, the structure and theme of 7:1-12 will at times be considered.

### **3.2 Approaches**

There is no shortage of opinions in suggesting how the structure of the SOM, including that of the text in question can or should be divided. Talbert (2006:120) points out that the preceding sections of the SOM found in Matthew 5:21-48 and 6:2-18 both have “clearly defined units of thought within the Sermon on the Mount.” Both of these preceding sections are introduced by headings found in Matthew 5:17-20 and 6:1 respectively.

As Matthew 6:19-24 contains no heading, there has been some doubt cast on whether or not the reader has any access to the formal arrangement of this section of the SOM (Talbert 2006). Beare (1981:180) says that Matthew 6:19-34 does not have a clearly defined structure, as opposed to the preceding sections of Chapter 6. Beare makes the point that the sayings found in Matthew 6:19-34 are “diverse and drawn from different sources”

Like Beare, Harrington (1991:104) believes that Matthew 6:19-34 is unlike the preceding sections of the SOM as it has no well defined structure. The preceding units being the introduction of 5:1-20, 5:21-48 and 6:1-18. Harrington believes that 6:19-7:12 appears in the same vein as Jewish wisdom literature, in that there are several sayings that are put alongside one another as they share similar content or literary nature.

Even if, as Beare (1981:180) believes, the sayings are drawn from different sources, there are enough scholars who note that a formal structure can be discerned (Talbert 2006:120; Allison and Davies 1988:626; Guelich 1982:324). This thesis will work on the assumption of the latter, i.e. that a formal division of the text can be found.

Stock (1989:105) believes that while there are four prohibitions in 6:19, 25, 7:1 and 7:6 that unify 6:19-7:12 the content is too varied to be able to identify a unifying thematic theme. This is however, not the case. There is enough similarity in theme

between 6:19-24 and 7:1-11 that is concluded well by the Golden Rule in 7:12 (Allison 1987: 436).

Allison (1987:436) notes that as 6:19-34 speaks about worldly wealth, and 7:1-11 speaks about attitude towards others, both passages can be said to be talking of “temporal” issues. Thus Allison says 6:19-7:11 talks about “social issues.” This makes the Golden Rule of 7:12, which includes the exhortation to do well to others found in 7:12 an apt way to conclude 6:19-7:12. I.e. there is a common theme that unites 6:19-7:12.

Luz and Patte are scholars who advocate that the SOM has been arranged in chiasmic structure (Talbert 2006:22). This approach is problematic as it breaks up the “natural thought units.” For example, in Patte’s approach 6:19-7:12 is broken into 6:19-21 and 6:22-7:12. The problem being that the natural argument reflects 6:19-34 talking about wealth related issues and 7:1-12 goes on to talk about attitude towards others.

Guelich (1982:322) argues that Matthew 6:19-7:12 is made up of units of tradition, seen as follows; 6:19-24, 6:25-34, 7:1-5, 7:6, 7:11 and 7:12. Guelich (p.324) favours Bornkamm’s approach to understanding the structure of the text. To accept this approach one would have to understand the Lord’s Prayer found in Matthew 6 as the “organising principle” for Matthew 6:19-7:12. Each of the above mentioned units of tradition are, according to Guelich (p.325), put forward as a “practical elaboration,” of the petitions found in the Lord’s Prayer.

Bornkamm’s (Guelich 1982:324) breakdown of the text would then be seen as follows:

- a) The three sayings of Matthew 6:19-24 talk about treasures and singleness of purpose, which emphasises the first three petitions of the Lords prayer which teach God’s glory and purposes as the disciples “ultimate priorities.”
- b) Matthew 6:25-34 focuses on rejecting an anxious life in favour of trust in God and so emphasises the fourth petition of the prayer for daily bread in the Lord’s Prayer.
- c) Matthew 7:1-5 puts the emphasis on the passage on forgiveness from the

Lord's Prayer, as 7:1-5 teaches on judging others. Thus the fifth petition of the Prayer is covered.

- d) Matthew 7:6 elaborates the sixth and seventh petition as both passages, according to Bornkamm, relate to apostasy.
- e) Matthew 7:7-11 teaches about answered prayer and is used by Matthew to conclude the 'larger section' on Prayer (p.325).

Guelich is not alone in his approach. Like Guelich, Hendrickx (1984:129) views Matthew 6:19-34 as a commentary on the Lord's Prayer. Hendrickx believes that the seeking God's Kingdom command of Matthew 6:33 is the "climax" of Matthew 6:19-34 and thus puts the text in the "context of the Lord's Prayer." Hendrickx argues that both 6:33 and the Lord's Prayer promote the disciple submitting in all things to God's sovereign rule.

The approach of Guelich and Hendrickx carries several problems; Firstly, while there are parallel verses in Luke suggesting that the sayings of 6:19-24, 6:25-34, 7:1-5, 7:6, 7:11 and 7:12 are units of tradition it is possible that Jesus may have used the same material in different contexts. A habit of using almost exact words and phrases in different sermons is not necessarily uncommon for an itinerant preacher (Lioy 2004:93).

Thus one cannot say for certain that, for example, the sayings of 6:19-24 and 6:25-34 are separate sources that were redacted in Matthew in order to be a commentary on the Lord's Prayer. They might well have been preached alongside one another, perhaps even word for word by Jesus.

Secondly, the thematic links between the Lord's Prayer and the elaborations of 6:19-7:12 do not always fit. To view 6:19-7:12 as an elaboration on the Lord's Prayer is to ignore the themes promoted by 6:19-7:12's own context. For example, Allison (1987:425) argues that Bornkamm's link of 7:6 which Bornkamm believes talks about apostasy and 6:7 which contains the "lead us not into temptation" petition of the Lord's Prayer is not clear. Allison's point being that while it is possible that 6:7 may meant to be a prayer to lead one out of the temptation (which we can't know as Matthew did not define what temptation he is speaking of) of apostasy, Bornkamm

would not have ever found such a link unless he has set out to find it.

Thirdly, adopting Guelich's approach is to ignore the thematic consistency found between 6:19-24 and 6:25-34 (Allison 1987: 425). The teachings of Matthew 6:19-34 raise questions for the disciple regarding material possessions that are then answered in 6:25-34. Guelich disregards this link by claiming that 6:25-34 is linked with 7:1-5 and 7:6 as part of the elaboration of the "we" petitions found in the Lord's Prayer, as opposed to being linked with 6:19-24 which would form part of the "Thou" petitions found in the Lord's Prayer (Allison 1987: 425).

The consensus seems to be that 6:19-34 can be split into two parts, 6:19-24 and 25-34. Blomberg (1992b:75) echoes this when he argues that 6:19-34 is split into two major sections, 6:19-24 and 25-34. The division is made by a difference in subject matter, in so far as 19-24 talks about wealth and 25-34 talks about worry

However, Blomberg (1992b:75) does note that the two sections are held together by an overarching theme. For Blomberg, the theme being the endorsement of believers to reject things that challenge devotion to Christ in favour of uncompromised devotion to Christ, and a trust in God's care for believers who are devoted to His kingdom .

Blomberg's (1992b:75) division of the text breaks down further as follows;

- a) First Major Section divides into three units
  - 6:19-21- "contrasts earthly and heavenly treasures"
  - 6:22-23 – "contrasts people of light with those of darkness"
  - 6:24 – "contrasts two masters"

Blomberg (1992b:75) believes that a formal structure for 25-34 is unclear. He goes on to comment briefly on each verse with out identifying and unifying structural elements.

Allison (2004:98) falls into the camp of scholars who believe 6:19-7:12 forms a unit within the SOM. This unit breaks down into 6:19-34 and 7:1-12. Allison and Davies (1988:625) say, as is common, that 6:19-34 breaks down into the following four

paragraphs; 6:19-21, 22-23, 24 and 25-34. The four paragraphs are unified thematically in that they all speak about earthly wealth.

Allison (2004:98) says that 6:19-24 and 6:25-34 are “structurally similar” which helps support “the unity of theme” in 6:19-34. However, there is also a difference worth noting between 19-24 and 25-34. He says that the three sayings of 19-24 are used by Matthew as “imperatives,” whereas the next section (verses 25-34) is used to comfort disciples who choose to follow the teachings of Christ.

Allison and Davies (1998:626) present the similarity in structure portrayed in the following table:

Thesis Statement/Introduction		22a	24a,25	
Two supporting observations in antithesis or compound parallelism	19-20	22b-23b	24b-c	26,28-30
Concluding remarks	21	23c-d	24d	32-34

Allison and Davies (1998:626) also argue that the formal structure of 6:19-34 can be seen, when it is realised that structurally it is identical to 7:12. The similarities can be seen as follows (Allison and Davies 1988:626)

- a) Both open with an exhortation 6:19-21/7:1-2.
- b) Then both “continue with the theme “and included a parable about an eye 6:22-23/7:3-5.
- c) Then another parable follows 6:24/7:6
- d) Both then have sections which appeal to God’s care for his disciples as a form of encouragement.

Further Allison and Davies (1988:626) say the following similarities between 6:25-34

and 7:7-11 are worth noting:

- a) Both use arguments from the lesser to the greater.
- b) Both use repetition of key words, around which the argument is built. "Worry," is found five times in 6:25,27-28,31,34 and "ask and seek," in 7:7, 8, 9, 10 and 12.
- c) Both use two illustrations to argue their point. The illustrations being respectively that of the birds of the air and the lilies of the field as well as the son who ask their Father for bread and fish.

Allison says that Matthew often groups things in three's and so looks for triads in order to identify the structure of the text (Brooks 1992:27). However, Brooks argues that just because triads are "prominent" in Matthew it does not follow that they should be seen as markers to the formal structure. The example of a triad that does not fit is the relationship between 6:19-24 and 7:1-12 where the exhortation and parables "are not parallel."

Stassen, like Allison, looks for the triads to find the text's formal structure. Stassen (2003:268) argues that the Gospel of Matthew shows a preference for triads; this is seen clearly when one notes that Matthew contains approximately 75 triads, as opposed to only several dyads. Stassen (p.285) also views 6:19-7:12 as a one of the larger pericopes within the SOM. His argument is that while scholars have divided the SOM into larger pericopes, there is a triadic structure to be seen in each pericope (pp.267-268). The triads in the SOM are made up as follows

- a) a traditional teaching
- b) a vicious cycle
- c) a transforming initiative that delivers from the vicious cycle. The transforming initiative includes an explanation.

When applied to 6:19-34 one would see the triads displayed as follows:

- a) 6:19-23 – the traditional teaching is found in Jesus instructing disciples not to lay up treasure on earth (Stassen 2003:285). The vicious cycle would be the moth and rust destroying and the transforming initiative would be the imperative given by Jesus to store up treasure in Heaven . The explanation is

the saying of the good and bad eye.

- b) 6:24-34 – the traditional teaching would be found in 6:24ab where Jesus informs His audience that one cannot serve two Masters as he will hate the one and love the other. The vicious cycle begins in 6:24c informing the disciple that she or he cannot serve God and Mammon. The vicious cycle continues with the command not to worry in 6:25 (p.286).

Stassen (p.287) notes that this vicious cycle has an exception to the rule, as in the previous triads an imperative is found in the transforming initiative. In this triad there is an imperative found in Jesus saying, “Therefore I say to.” The transforming initiative is found in 6:26, 28 and 33. Jesus saying that each day has enough trouble is seen as the explanation to the initiative.

Stassen (2003:286) rightly notes that most scholars see 6:24 as grouped with 6:19-23, but would not work well with his thesis as it would require a traditional teaching to be found in 6:25-30 and as such would contain three imperatives which do not fit the structure of the triads found throughout the SOM.

While Allison, Davies and Stassen’s triad approach does at times “work,” there are times when exceptions to the rules either exist or must apply. Or as in Stassen’s case, when he groups 6:24 with 6:25-7:12 it appears as if he is forcing a rigid structure that the text does not always present for itself.

### **3.3 The Working Model**

Brooks (1992:27-28) offers a suggestion. In light of the vast amount of disagreement over the Structure of the SOM, Brooks suggests that Matthew did not have as a rigid structure as scholars are looking for. It is obvious that Matthew grouped things in three, but he may not have rigidly followed such a structure. Thus to understand the structure of the text purely in triad form may be to miss some of what Matthew is trying to portray.

In acknowledgment that it should be taken into account that Matthew liked to group things in three, Talbert’s (2006:26) proposed structure presents itself as the most

appealing. He seems to at times acknowledge this and at times not. He groups the major thought units of the SOM by way of scholarly consensus, including 6:19-34, but allows for “innovation” in the sub division of the major thought units of the SOM. So, while for example he breaks down 6:19-24 into three parts, the three parts can vary in structural outline (as will be seen below).

Further, his approach seems to follow the natural argument of the text. For example, by allowing for some innovation in the sub units and not enforcing a strict triad formula he can acknowledge a prohibition in part one of his first sub unit, without having to “find” another prohibition in part two of the first sub unit.

For Talbert (2006:120) the division of the text looks as follows; Matthew 6:19-34 can be divided into two “sub-units” made up of 6:19-24 and 6:24-34. These sub-units are “controlled” by the two negative commands found in 6:19 and 6:25. Matthew 6:19 contains the negative command to not lay up treasure on earth and 6:25 contains the command not to worry command.

Each of these sub units breaks down further into three parts each, seen as follows (Talbert 2006:121):

Sub-Unit One of 6:19-24 can be seen to break down as follows (Talbert 2006:121):

- a) Part One – “The Two Treasures”– 6:19-21
  - A prohibition is found in 6:19 to not to lay up treasures on earth.
  - A command is found in 6:20 to lay up treasures in heaven.
  - A reason is found in 6:21 in that one’s heart will be where their treasure is.
- b) Part Two –“The Two eyes” – 6:22-23
  - An assertion is found in 22a in Jesus stating the eye is the lamp of the body.
  - An inference is found in 22b and 23a saying that if the eye is good then the body will be full of light and conversely if bad will be full of darkness.
  - A conclusion is found in 23b, in Jesus saying that if the light in you is darkness then how great is that darkness.
- c) Part Three – “The Two Masters” – 6:24

- An assertion in 6:24 with the statement that no one can serve two Masters.
- The reason is found in 24b and 24c as a person will love one and hate the other.
- There is an application in 24d in the statement that one cannot serve both God and Mammon.

In the three above sayings of the Treasures, Eyes and Masters there is an antithesis which depicts the 'wrong way' and the 'right way (Talbert 2006:121).'

The Sub-Unit two of Matthew 6:25-34 can be seen to break down as follows (Talbert 2006:126):

a) Part One – Matthew 6:25-30

- A prohibition is found in verse 25a for the disciple to not worry.
- Four reasons relating to the Prohibition then follow in verses 25b, 26, 27 and 28-30.

b) Part Two – Matthew 6:31-33

- There is a prohibition found in verse 31 to not worry.
- This time two reasons are related to the prohibition and found in verses 32a and 32b. The reasons being that it is Gentile behaviour and God knows the disciples' needs.
- There is a command found in 33a to seek God's Kingdom.
- There is a promise in 33b relating to the command found in 33a.

c) Part Three – Matthew 6:34

- There is a do not be worried prohibition found in 34b.
- Two reasons related to the prohibition are found in 34b (tomorrow will worry about its own things) and 34c (Sufficient for the day is its own trouble).

Talbert further makes a case for such an arrangement by showing that the next major unit of thought in Matthew is found in Matthew 7:1-12, which carries the same structure as 6:19-34 (Talbert 2006:120). I.e. Matthew 7:1-12 consists of two sub units, each "controlled" by two prohibitions and each sub-unit breaking down into

three parts.

While the literary approach to the structure of Matthew 6:19-34 will be to follow Talbert's outline as displayed above, there are elements from other outlines that will be considered. For example, Stassen's idea that a transforming initiative can be found in the text will be examined. While the formal structure outlined by Talbert and Stassen may not match exactly, it may be for example, that Jesus saying to store up treasures in heaven labelled as a command in Talbert's outline, may also prove to be a transforming initiative.

For Stassen (2003:267-208) the transforming initiative would be the act of trust that frees the disciple from the ongoing negative consequence of sin, or the "vicious cycle." The point is that it could be both. So in this these while Talbert's outline will be followed to systematically work through the text, there must be room for innovation as Talbert himself asserts.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

This thesis will work on the common scholarly opinion that 6:19-34 is a unit of thought and can break into the two parts of 6:19-24 and 6:25-34. The sayings of Matthew 6:19-24 and 6:25-34 are thematically related and structurally similar enough to be unified. Further the mirror structure, common elements of and an overarching theme with 7:1-12 affirms this unity.

The chiastic structure model of the text was rejected as it at times breaks up the natural flow of the argument presented in the SOM. The model that suggests that the SOM and thus 6:19-34 are to be seen as a commentary or exposition on the Lord's Prayer was rejected as thematically there are inconsistencies between the Lord's Prayer and the suggested associated units of tradition. Further it was noted that the sayings of 6:19-34 were not necessarily individual units of tradition, but the coherent message of an itinerant preacher.

Talbert's model for the division and subdivision of the text will be used as the working model for the remainder of the literary analysis. His approach was favoured

as it allows for the recognition of triads and patterns without enforcing these elements in every situation, which in turn has allowed him to follow the natural argument of the text.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Literary Analysis – Matthew 6:19-24**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The primary task of the next two chapters is to continue the literary analysis of the passage in question. The previous chapter settled on Talbert's model for the formal division of the text. The next two chapters will follow Talbert's outline but will focus on the rhetoric, grammar, genre and composition that could affect the meaning of the passage (Smith 2008:172-173). Additionally there will be an examination of key words and phrases, i.e. a lexical analysis (p.174).

#### **4.2 The Three Parts of Matthew 6:19-24**

In following Talbert's structural model, Matthew 6:19-24 can be divided into three distinct parts, which can be seen as follows; verses 19-24 breaks down into 19-21, 22-23 and verse 24 (Talbert 2006:120). These three parts will now be examined.

##### **4.2.1 Part One – The Two Kinds of Treasure**

Part one of Matthew 6:19-24 is 6:19-21 (Talbert 2006:121). Part one consists of a prohibition, a command and a reason. The prohibition is found in 6:19 where Jesus commands His disciples not to lay up treasures on earth where they are subject to decay and theft.

It was said earlier that the three sayings of 6:19-24 contain an antithesis depicting

the wrong way and right way (Talbert 2006:121). The antithesis is seen in verse 19 depicting the “wrong way” while verse 20 depicts the “right way (Hendrickx 1984:129).” Lloyd-Jones (2006:396) says that as there is a negative command in verse 19 and a positive command in verse 20 this means that the disciple is left with no excuse in making a decision. Lenski (1964:275-276) also picks up on the negative command or prohibition and argues that the negative command can be read as “stop treasuring,” i.e. it was something the disciples were currently doing.

The imagery created by Jesus commanding his disciples not to lay up treasures on earth would be one of a person either amassing treasure or storing it up for safe keeping. This is seen as follows: the word for treasure comes from *thesauro* which was used in ancient Jewish Culture to refer to treasure or some sort of storage facility such as “treasure chamber, a storage room, granary, or strongbox (Eichler & Brown 1976:829-830).” “Lay up” comes from *thesaurizo* and is used similarly to *thesauros* in the sense of “storing up treasure, or putting it in safe keeping.”

*Thesaurizo* is often put to use by NT authors as a “concept” to teach the idea that God and man’s values as they relate to material possessions are at odds; what people consider of great value, God considers worthless, and “real treasure involves earthly poverty (Eichler & Brown 1976:830-831).”

A surface level reading of Matthew 6:19-20 seems to enforce the idea that earthly poverty is necessary to gain Heavenly riches. It looks like Jesus is stating that it is impossible to accumulate both earthly and heavenly treasure. However, it is unlikely that Jesus was prohibiting the accumulation of all material possessions.

Ridderbos (1987:136) shows that several other passages from scripture suggest that Jesus did not forbid acquiring material possessions. Doriani (2006:156) points out that Jesus wouldn’t be forbidding all economic activity as the bible in fact condones hard work and prudent investment of wealth (Genesis 41 and Proverbs 6:6-10).

Further, Ridderbos (1987:136) argues that Jesus, being a Jewish teacher, would have had a style of teaching that uses contrasts that need not be taken in the absolutes. Watson (n.d.:18) follows a similar line. He notes that the teaching style

common to a teacher like Jesus would have made use of exaggeration or hyperbole, the point of which is to show preference for one option over another.

Guelich (1982:326) points out that the prohibition in verse 19 to not store up treasure on earth is followed by two justifications for the prohibition. The first being that moth and rust destroy, i.e. there are “destructive natural forces.” Moth comes from *ses* (Brown 1975:119) It is being used here in Matthew 6:19 to depict “graphically the temporary state of material possessions.” The imagery created by “rust” will make the same point.

Rust is translated from *brosis* (Hendrickx 1984:129). *Brosis* means literally, “eating.” It can also mean literally rust, and so can be referring to the rusting of metals (Carson 1994:83). Further, it could refer to corrosion of any kind including that made responsible by animals. Guelich (1982:326) affirms this when he notes that in the Septuagint *brosis* is used in reference to an insect (Guelich 1982:326).

The second justification for the command to not to lay up treasure on earth is that thieves break in and steal i.e. “the destructive forces of evil persons (Guelich 1982:327).” To break in is also translated as “dig through (Carson 1994:83).” This makes sense in the context as homes of poor people in ancient Palestine were made of mud brick and someone (in this case a thief) could literally dig through into a person’s house (Lioy 2004:167).

The earthly treasures to which Jesus refers are clothes, precious metals and probably anything that can perish (Matt6:19). Eichler and Brown (1976:83) in addressing what the earthly treasures would be affirms that the image created by Matthew includes “Oriental wealth, garments etc. stored in barbaric abundance, too numerous for use.”

Carson (1994:83) says the way the treasure is lost (or what the earthly treasure is) is not the point Jesus’ is making. According to Carson what is important is the principle being conveyed i.e. that these treasures could be anything valuable that could be lost to its owner. However, a significant point which Carson does not make clear is that the context of the passage indicates that the earthly treasures that one would

value highly would be some sort of material wealth.

Keener (2009:232) notes that there was a view among some philosophers in antiquity that material possessions in themselves are evil. Keener shows his readers that Jesus did not subscribe to this philosophy but rather embraces the view that one's material possessions should be used in obedience to God to serve others. The Gospel of Luke verses 19:21; 3:11 and 12:33-44 are used to make his point.

That Jesus prohibits laying up treasures on *earth* is also of importance. As Guelich (1982:326) notes earth is cast in a negative light when compared to heaven. Earth is seen here as the realm of a fallen creation where things perish. This is in contrast to Heaven which is seen as a place where things do not perish (Matt 6:20).

Part One then moves to the command in verse 20 (Talbert 2006:121). Verse 20 contains the command by Jesus to His disciples to lay up treasures in Heaven. The positive command to lay up for yourselves treasure in Heaven is the positive part of the antitheses of verses 19-21 (Guelich 1982:327).

Heaven is put to the reader as the opposite of earth (Lenski 1964:296). Already mentioned is the fact that there are destructive natural and evil forces at work on earth. This showed the temporal state and ultimate worthlessness of material wealth (Guelich 1986:326). While in contrast to material wealth stored on earth, Heavenly treasure is secure as it is protected in a realm beyond natural decay and evil forces.

There have been several ideas as to what treasures in Heaven in this passage are and how they are acquired by the disciple. Wright (2002:63) notes that the Jews of Jesus day believed in an eternal reward for God's people, but didn't normally refer to that future as "Heaven." Wright says that Heaven refers to "where God is right now." The implication for is that by loving and serving God treasure can be enjoyed in the present.

However, Eichler & Brown (1976:831) present a conflicting idea and affirm that "Treasure in Heaven" is a Jewish idea that refers to "what wins divine approval and reward in the coming kingdom." Lloyd-Jones (2006:399) doesn't define what the

treasures would be, but agrees that they would be received in eternity as a result of trusting God by doing well to others with the possessions in one's care. Lloyd-Jones makes the case by referring to two passages of scripture, the first being Jesus' parable of the shrewd manager found in Luke 16.

Luke 16 is a passage of scripture where disciples are encouraged to use possessions to do good to others and in that way will be repaid for their good in eternity (Luke 16:1-13). A comparison is worthwhile as Luke 16:13 contains the same metaphor of the two Masters that is found in Matthew 6:24. The second passage is found in Matthew 25 where again disciples are rewarded at judgment for the good they did to others.

It is worth noting that Lloyd Jones (2006:398) dismisses the belief that laying up treasure in Heaven means to earn one's eternal salvation, as that is to ignore the doctrine of justification by faith so clearly expounded in the rest of the New Testament. While Lloyd-Jones is correct in not adopting the view that Jesus is encouraging disciples to earn salvation, one should also consider the purpose of the SOM as seen in chapter One.

Keener (1993:63) says that the idea of laying up treasures with God in Jewish thought referred to either God helping the generous person in a time of need or (as above) God rewarding people in the afterlife. Keener believes the context here supports the latter. Wright is correct in that there are rewards and blessing related to obedience to God in this age (Luke 18:29-30).

However, Lloyd Jones and Keener are correct that the context is pointing to a future reward. As the passage talks about rewards that are kept imperishable, this surely means they are in the future consummations of Jesus' kingdom. Ridderbos (1987:137) affirms this idea when he says treasures in Heaven are so called as according to verse 20b "that is where they are kept." I.e. rewards for obedience to God are both a present and eternal reality.

The question that follows is how does one lay up treasures in Heaven? Some scholars point to generosity to others as a way of accumulating Heavenly Treasure.

There are parallel “ideas” in “Jewish wisdom literature of the Hebrew Bible, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Dead Sea Scrolls (Sihombing 2006:155).”

Thus Talbert (2006:121-122), following a similar thought, asks the question as to how Jesus’ audience would have understood this. He answers this by making reference to 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and Peah which talks of generosity to others as a way of laying up treasures for oneself in heaven.

France (1985:138) argues that when the language of Matthew 6:19-34 is compared to Matthew 19:21 it seems that the way to lay up treasures in heaven would be by showing generosity to others. Matthew 19:21 is that passage where Jesus says to a man, ‘...if you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.’

France (1985:138) believes that the potential for laying up treasure in Heaven is wider than in just being generous to others, but is available to the disciple who is obedient to God, “in all areas of life,” the implication being that the disciple puts God first in all matters. However verse 24 will make it clear that in this context wealth is in focus in as much as Jesus is more concerned about the disciple’s loyalty over and above their wealth.

In reflecting on 6:19-20, one could conclude that Jesus speaking in absolutes and using antitheses is commanding the disciples to choose obedience to God over the accumulation of material wealth. Jesus, as mentioned, provided reasons for the prohibition and command, i.e. the contrasting nature and disposition of earthly and Heavenly treasure. The prohibition and command of verses 19 and 20 is then followed by a reason in verse 21 (Talbert 2006:121). This is the verse where Jesus declares that where the disciple’s treasure is there their heart will be also.

In the same way that the physical heart takes its place as the “most important” organ in the human body, so *kardia* came to refer figuratively to a person’s “...entire mental and moral activity, both the rational and emotional elements (Unger & White 1985:297).” By making reference to proverbs 4:23, Ridderbos (1987:137) argues that the heart is “...the seat of man’s thoughts and desires.”

Blomberg (1992:123) shows that the heart can be viewed as that part of the person which “forms the centre of one’s affections and commitments...” As Guelich (1982:328) notes, the heart is seen metaphorically as the “ultimate direction” of a person’s “innermost desires.”

One could then sum up the reason for the antithesis as follows: the affection of one’s heart sets the direction of one’s life. Jesus’ reason for the disciple choosing allegiance to Him over the accumulation of wealth is not only related to the eternal value of Heavenly treasure and the temporariness of earthly wealth, but that a heart that sets its affection on wealth will be a life lived in contrast to the demands of obedience in God’s Kingdom.

#### **4.2.2 Part Two – The Good and Bad Eye**

Part Two of Matthew 6:1-24 is found in verses 22-23 (Talbert 2006:121). Part Two is made up of an “assertion,” “inferences” and a “conclusion.” The assertion is found in the first part of verse 22 where Jesus says that the eye is the lamp of the body.

It seems likely that with this assertion Jesus is quoting a well known parable (Stern 1992:32). This verse is confusing to modern readers as this proverb states the opposite of the contemporary saying which goes like this, ‘the eye is the window to the soul (Hauk 2006:57).’ The modern idea being that something of the internal life of an individual can be seen reflected in an individual’s eyes.

People in antiquity believed that light entered the body through the eyes much like a window, thus if the eyes are good then much like a room with a window, the person becomes full of light (Tasker 1971:75). Carson (1994:86) prefers to view the metaphor as a person being a house or room and the role of the lamp is to make sure that the person is full of light. One could also argue that the eye as a lamp would give direction to person much like a lamp would. The view taken by this thesis is that whichever view one prefers, what remains the same is the intended destination; for the eye to be good so the body can be full of light (Mtt 6:22).

The goal of the metaphor becomes clear when one agrees that eye and heart can be used interchangeably (Stott 1998:157). As Doriani (2006:159) notes, both eye and heart can be, "...the inner person that sets life's direction." Ferguson (1987:139) shows that, "...fixing the eye and fixing the heart amount to the same thing."

For example in Psalm 119 between verses 10 and 37 eye and heart are used synonymously on several occasions (Doriani 2006:159). Affirming this idea is the existence of several biblical ideas relating to the eye that are used to convey some sort of emotional disposition, for example, pride, humility, and joy (Roberts 1963:147).

For this metaphor, once the assertion that the eye is the lamp of the body is made, two inferences are drawn (Talbert 2006:120-123). The inferences can be seen as a deduction or conclusion from the assertion made in verse 22. The first inference can be found in Jesus words, "If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light." The second "inference" would be, "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness."

The natural questions that follow from these inferences are: what is the good and bad eye? And what does it mean to be full of light and darkness? Good is translated from *haplous* (Hahn 1986:487). The Septuagint uses the word to denote singleness of purpose and undivided loyalty (Carson 1994:86). Carson favours the Septuagint's meaning as he believes the passage does not harp on about generosity as much as refers to a person's ultimate valuation of things and a person's commitment to the Kingdom (p.97).

While Carson has a point about that *haplous* could refer to undivided loyalty, it is likely, as Talbert (2006:122) notes, that the original hearers would have understood this loyalty to God to be expressed in their generosity towards others. In Jesus' day, the Jewish community would have understood the eye to refer to the attitude one has to another human being. *Haplous* can be translated as sound (Green 1986:741). Talbert (2006:122) points to Old Testament and Extra Biblical Jewish literature to argue that the sound eye makes references to a person who has a generous attitude towards others.

Talbert (2006:122) argues this by referring to Jewish literature like Deuteronomy 15:9 which says, "...and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing." The context of Deuteronomy 15 is one where God is commanding Israel to be generous in releasing each other from debts.

Taking into account that heart and eye are synonymous, and that the good eye is a focused loyalty towards God expressed through generosity to others, the reader can now ask what does, "your whole body will be full of light" mean? "Your whole body" is a Semitic expression which is a way of saying "you yourself (Carson 1994:86)."

Light can metaphorically refer to "goodness and holiness as opposed to evil (Ryken, Wilhoit & Longman III 1998:510)." Light can be a symbol for truth, revelation and blessing (Ryken et al 1998:510-512). Light can also make a reference to purity (Carson 1994:87). The inference by Jesus is then as follows: if the disciples innermost affection is directed towards God (expressed through generosity), the disciples life will be characterised by truth, purity, revelation and blessing. In this way the disciples "whole body" or the person her or himself will be full of light.

There are several possibilities as to what the biblical meaning of the bad eye could be. Firstly, it could refer to wicked motive (Roberts 1963:143). 1 Samuel 18:9 is used as a proof text (p.44). 1 Samuel 18:9 reads as follows, "So Saul eyed David from that day forward." Roberts (1963:44) notes that Matthew 6 must be understood in the context of Jesus talking about money and so this view on the bad eye does not fit best.

Secondly the bad eye could refer to stinginess (Roberts 1963:143-147). In Matthew 20:15 Jesus asks the question, "[O]r is your eye evil because I am good?" Roberts favours stinginess as the meaning for the bad eye. He does this by arguing that Matthew 20:15 draws a contrast between a stingy manager who has an evil eye and a generous employer.

Further, (Roberts 1963:143-147) believes the OT passages relating to the evil eye should be seen as "definitive" in the way Jesus uses the term. Several passages from the OT promote the evil eye as a stingy disposition:

- a) Deuteronomy 28:54-55 shows a person with an evil eye is a person not prepared to share with his family in a time of need.
- b) Proverbs 23:6-7 talks of a person with an evil eye as a person who "...hastens after riches."

Deuteronomy 15:19 makes a direct connection between an evil eye and the disposition of the heart (Brown 1993:168). Deuteronomy 15:19 reads as follows, "Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, 'The Seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,' and you eye be evil against your poor brother and give him nothing..." The teaching on giving in this passage shows that God is concerned not just about His people obeying His command to do good to the poor amongst them, but is also concerned about the disposition of the giver.

The bad eye is therefore the opposite of the good eye. Where the good eye correlates to a generous attitude to others, the bad eye correlates to a stingy attitude towards others. The results of having a generous heart out of obedience to God are also in contrast to disobedience to God characterised by a stingy heart. As opposed to a person characterised by light, the person with a bad eye will be characterised by darkness.

According to Talbert's model, Part Two then moves to a conclusion (Talbert 2006:121). The conclusion is found in verse 23b where Jesus says that if the light within a person is dark how great that darkness must be. At this point it seems that Talbert's model for the division of the text may not fit well, as it is unclear as to how this verse concludes the saying of the good and bad eye.

It would perhaps be better to view this verse as an additional assertion or a third inference. The verse seems to address a person who is deceived or disillusioned. This verse makes the point that the darkness that can characterise a person is especially bad if the person believes that their darkness is actually light (Carson 1994:86). Thus if the bad eye (a stingy heart) believes it is generous and appropriate

for God's kingdom, it is in a bad state indeed.

### 4.2.3 Part Three – The Two Masters

The third and final part of Matthew 6:19-24 is found in verse 24. (Talbert 2006:121-123). It is made up of an “assertion”, a “reason” and an “application.” The assertion is found in Jesus words, when he says “No one can serve two Masters.” Masters were less like modern day employers, and more like slave owners (Carson 1994:87-88).

The Word for slave in the New Testament is the adjective *doulos* (Spicq 1994:380). “To be a slave is to be attached to a Master (p.381).” As Stott (1998:158) says, “Slavery by definition demands full time service of the slave and a belonging to one Master.” France (1985:139) believes the same when he argues that “serve” means to literally, “be a slave of,” the implication being one cannot have two owners. Also Spicq (p.383) says that an essential role of a slave is to act for the benefit of her or his master.

Master is translated from *kurios* (Spicq 1994b:348). It is used throughout the New Testament to address people with respect and formality, (and at time as will be shown in Chapter six, to refer to divinity) in this case a slave owner. When applied to God, it is used in the New Testament to show God as Lord over people, creation, Heaven and earth. As Lord, God is displayed as one who must be obeyed and pleased. This becomes important when one examines the reason linked to the assertion.

The reason is found in verse 24b and 24c when Jesus says “...for either he will love the one and hate the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other (Talbert 2006:123).” Jesus references to love and hate are not to be taken absolutely (Carson 1994:88). To hate something or some one over another is a way of denoting preference in Semitic language (Talbert 2006:123; Carson 1994:88).

As France (1985:139) shows, “hate” is used here not to convey “active dislike,” but a preference of allegiance to one owner over another. Here the word for love is the verb *agapao* and can be used to show a tremendous amount of value for something

and is also a kind of love that cannot be kept in the heart only but expresses itself in action (Spicq 1994:12).

Thus the reason one cannot have two Masters is one will inevitably show greater value for and preference for one over the other. The slave is to work for the benefit of her or his Master (Spicq 1994:382) Thus a split allegiance between will not suffice. Further, to love can be used interchangeably with to serve, thus Jesus is showing that one would serve one over the other (Talbert 2006:123).

Verse 24d brings the application (Talbert 2006: 121). This is where Jesus says, “You cannot serve God and mammon (Mtt 6:24).” Thus, as mammon could be one’s Master, mammon could be served at the expense of the Master who is God. God, who is the Lord of the universe and who is to be pleased and obeyed, can be displaced with mammon. Liroy (2004:167) notes this would be a violation of the first commandment.

The question remains, what is mammon? France (1985:139) says that mammon is from the Aramaic word, *mamona* which refers to possessions. Keener (1993:63) attests that mammon is the Aramaic word for ‘possessions or money.’ In a similar vein Kapolyo (2006:1123) notes that mammon can be translated as money. Further, the NIV translates mammon as Money (Carson 1994:88). What is important for this thesis is that money is included in the meaning of the word or at least implied.

The root meaning of the word denotes something in which people put their trust (Bruce 1978:22; Haughey 1997:6). It seems that as people often put their confidence in wealth, Mammon eventually referred to “all material possessions (Carson 1994:88).” Kapolyo (2006:1123) says that mammon is “the Carthaginian god of wealth.” However France (1985:139) says that mammon is not a personal name.

It is unclear who is correct. Whether or not mammon was the Carthaginian god of wealth, clearly it is being presented as something which competes for the disciples’ allegiance to God, and is thus a potential idol. As a general rule wealth seems to easily displace Christ as of central importance (Bruce 1978:23). Bruce points to Colossians 3:5 which equates covetousness with idolatry.

The statement that one cannot serve both God and Mammon can be seen as an example of a choice (Carson 1994:88). This stands in contrast to those who interpret the verse by saying that people essentially only have two choices: God or Money. One could argue that money is but one form of rival god to the disciple's allegiance to Christ. Haughey (1997:6) believes Jesus is essentially saying that there are several kinds of mammon that people put their trust in.

Haughey (1997:6) argues that Jesus tells his disciples that placing their trust in several sources must come to an end and their trust must be solely on God. Perhaps there are several forms of idols that compete for mastery over the Christian disciple. However, Haughey misses part of the point of the passage. Jesus is not talking here about several different idols, but rather that trusting in both God and wealth is not possible.

Worth paying attention to is the reason why money in particular as a rival god needs to be addressed. Saldarini (2003:1018) believes Jesus addresses the desire to feel secure through the acquisition of material wealth. Saldarini points to the contrast between verses 25-34 and 19-24 to make this point. Verses 6:25-34 as will be seen in chapter five is the portion that addresses the disciple's anxiety over daily necessities.

The fact that treasure on earth decays and can be stolen reinforces the point that they offer no permanent security (Kapolyo 2006:1123). In our context we can say that money can deteriorate because of inflation. This idea, of a disciple being tempted to serve wealth above God to alleviate anxiety will be explored further in the next chapter.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

In following Talbert's model of the formal division of the text, this chapter focused on examining the rhetoric, genre, composition, textual variants, key words and phrases of the text. The goal was to examine how these elements affect the understanding of the passage. The following was uncovered.

In the saying of the two kinds of treasure Jesus was not instituting an outright ban on the accumulation of material possessions. Jesus, using antithesis gives a prohibition and command, stated in the absolute, to show that His disciples must stop prioritising the accumulation of wealth over and above service to Gods and His kingdom. The reason for this instruction is that the affections of the disciples heart sets the course of her or his life, thus the allegiance and affection of a disciple's heart must be directed towards Jesus over and above the accumulation of wealth.

There are motivating factors given with this command. Namely the eternal and imperishable value that comes with a life lived in service to Jesus as opposed to the perishable and temporary value of possessions amassed on earth. What exactly treasures in Heaven are was not defined. What was noted is that they are received in the present and eternity as a result of obedience to God expressed in generosity to others.

The second part of Matthew 6:19-24 contains the saying of the good and bad eye. This saying continues the theme begun in the first saying of the affection and loyalty of the disciple's heart. Should a disciple's heart be turned to God and expressed through generosity towards others the disciple's life will be characterised by purity, revelation, blessing and truth. Conversely a heart not directed towards God and that is stingy towards others will lead to a degenerate experience for the disciple.

The final part of Matthew 6:19-24 is the saying of the two Masters. Again, the theme of allegiance to God expressed through one's attitude towards money or material possessions is continued. The saying makes the point that one's allegiance cannot be split between God and money. Material possessions were presented as an idol that rivals for the disciples' allegiance. Due to the human need to feel secure material wealth seems to easily displace the disciple's allegiance to Christ and it is this concern which Jesus is addressing

## **Chapter Five**

### **Literary Analysis – Matthew 6:25-34**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter continues the literary analysis begun in chapter 3. In keeping with Talbert's (2006:120) formal division for the text, this chapter will deal with the second sub-unit of Matthew 6:19-34, that is Matthew 6:25-34. As with the previous chapter attention will be paid to the rhetoric, genre, composition and grammar of the text. Similarly, there will be an examination of key words and phrases.

Once again, the stated goal of the literary analysis is to better understand the meaning of the passage in order to clarify the nature of the relationship between the Christian disciple and money as presented in Matthew 6:19-34. The previous chapter's examination of the three parts of Matthew 6:19-24 showed that a disciple must prioritise allegiance to Christ over and above wealth/money and the accumulation thereof. Matthew 6:25-34 begins with a therefore linking it to Matthew 6:19-24 and so will expand on the implication of this allegiance and its demands.

#### **5.2 The Three Parts of Matthew 6:25-34**

##### **5.2.1 Part One – Matthew 6:25-30**

Like with the first sub-unit, the second sub-unit is made up of three parts/units

(2006:120). The first part is found in Matthew 6:25-34 (p.126). This part begins with a prohibition in verse 25a and is then followed by four reasons for the prohibition found in verses 25b-30. The prohibition is made evident when it is seen that Jesus instructed His disciples not to worry about their lives, what they will eat and drink nor about their bodies and what they will wear.

The prohibition in verse 25a begins with Jesus saying “Therefore I say to you.” The “therefore” in verse 25 can be read literally as “on account of this (Hagner 1993:163)” While this connection refers definitely to verse 24 it more than likely refers to the whole of the preceding section. This thesis will work on the assumption that the connective “Therefore” is to connect Matthew 6:19-34 to Matthew 6:24-25.

In the first sub unit (Matthew 6:19-24), included in the conclusion was that the Christian disciple must set the affection of her or his heart toward Jesus over and above the accumulation of wealth. Further it was stated that the disciple’s life must be characterised by generosity and that the disciple, to avoid idolatry, must choose allegiance to God over money.

It then follows that such attitude and actions could leave the disciple feeling financially vulnerable. So it is fitting that the second sub-unit begins with, “Therefore do not worry,” as if the disciple’s accept the truth of verse 19-24 seriously they could find themselves anxious as to their financial state (Schmidt 1988:172).

Jesus saying, in verse 25 ‘I say to you,’ is a way to make reference to His authority (Hagner 1993:163). Several examples of this saying are found in the antithesis of 5:21-48 (Hagner 1993:163). For example, 5:21-22a reads as follows, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and who ever murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause will be in danger of judgment (Matt 5:21-22a).” I.e. Jesus assumes the right to speak prophetically about the ways of God.

In Chapter two references from Matthew were made to Jesus as a Moses-like figure. In reflecting on the use of these antitheses in the SOM, Goldsmith (2001:62) says that by using the pronoun “I” Jesus is asserting his authority to speak as greater than

Moses. Even more significant is that Jesus is the “personification of the ultimate giver of the Law, YHWH himself.”

When Jesus makes reference to the disciples’ lives He is making reference to “psyche (Brown 1975b:683).” Life can also be translated as soul (Hill 1977:144). In the Jewish context soul would refer to, “the essential element in a man’s vitality or aliveness (Hill 1977:144).” i.e. life is referring to one’s very existence. Brown (1975b:683) elaborates when he says, “Psyche embraced the whole natural being and life for which he concerns himself and of which he takes constant care.”

Body comes from the Greek soma (Motyer 1975:234). Soma carries several meanings in the New Testament. For example it can refer to the body of Jesus, a corpse, or the physical make up of a body. In this passage of Matthew soma refers to more than the body as a “...mere physical organism to the soma as signifying the self.”

In light of the meanings connected to psyche and soma in these verses, it is the position of this author that Jesus in this prohibition is forbidding His disciples to worry about necessities pertinent to human survival. Further as Hagner (1993:163) says, there are three “parallel verbs” in verse 26. The verbs being to sow, reap and gather. These verbs, “point to human preoccupation with financial security.”

It follows that desire for financial security is connected to the desire for human survival. The question that needs to come next is what kind of worry Jesus is speaking about. It is now clear that in this prohibition worry is related to the means of survival; however scholars are not unanimous on the kind of worry Jesus is referring to.

Worry is translated from the noun *merimna*, and relates especially to “anxious care (Unger and White 1985:89).” Blomberg (1992:125) says that worry is translated as “Take not thought” in the KJV. This translation will not suffice as Jesus is not commanding thoughtlessness but the absence of unnecessary care (Carson 1994:94). Thus the “do not worry” translation is better suited.

The command in this passage not to worry presupposes that “every man naturally cares for himself and his life...he is always intent on something and cares about something (Bultmann 1967:991).” This care is not ruled out as illegitimate. Care becomes a problem when it becomes worry/anxiety over items related to human survival (Matt. 6:25).

Carson argues that worry can be both appropriate and sinful (Carson 1994: 92-93). If worry is seen as merely “concern” its absence can at times be wrong (Carson 1994:92). Specifically, if there is an absence of concern relating to being faithful in obedience to Christ. On the other end of the spectrum worry that causes a person to have obscured priorities would be sinful. The kind of worry or anxiety Jesus is referring to here is thus the kind that relates to human survival and can obscure the disciples priority of seeking God’s Kingdom (Matt. 6:33).

The first reason related to the prohibition is found in verse 25b (Talbert 2006:126). This is where Jesus asks rhetorically as to whether life is not more than food and the body more than clothing? In asking this rhetorical question about the life and the body Jesus is in fact saying that life and the body, which is “existence...is more than food and clothing (Hagner 1993:1630).”

The point that life is more than food is embodied quite impressively by Jesus in Matthew 4:2-4 where He went without food for forty days (Powell 2000:877). This is the story where Jesus affirms that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from God.

The second reason related to the prohibition is found in verse 26 (Talbert 2006:126). Here Jesus point to birds of the air and the fact that they neither reap nor gather yet their Heavenly Father feeds them. Jesus then again rhetorically asks if His disciples are not of much more value.

Here Jesus is using a “*minore ad maius*” argument, which is an argument moving from the lesser to the greater (Carter 2000:177). By doing this Jesus makes the point that what God does by way of provision for the birds which are of lesser value, He will “surely” do for His disciples which are of greater value. Blomberg (1992:125)

rightly notes that humans are more valuable to God than birds as humans are made in the image of God.

By Jesus saying that the birds neither, “sow nor reap nor gather into barns,” He is clearly making a reference to the human desire for financial security (Hagner 1993:163). The birds when compared to the ongoing farming activities found in verse 26 are seen as “carefree (p. 164).” Even with such an analogy the admonition here is not to neglect work, but in working hard to trust God to provide (Blomberg 2007:29). This is argued firstly by affirming this scripture needs to be understood in light of OT wisdom literature, which encourages the reader to reject laziness and be diligent in working to supply for one’s needs. Secondly, as Blomberg (1992:125) says, birds in the day to day activity of gathering food are very diligent in their work ethic. So it is not that Jesus is discouraging hard work, but like the birds, disciples ultimately rely on God’s goodness for provision (Blomberg 1992:125; Hill 1977).

Jesus here refers to God as, “your Heavenly Father” who feeds the birds and who values His disciples more than birds. Heavenly Father is Matthew’s “favourite and distinctive title for God (Hagner 1993: 164).” That God is a “Heavenly Father” carries significance for this passage. Heaven does refer to a literal place. Earlier in the SOM Jesus teaches His disciples to pray to their Father in Heaven, and for the Father’s will to be executed on earth as it is in Heaven (Matt.6:9-10). The idea being that there is a place called Heaven where God’s will is perfectly carried out. However the fact that He is the disciples’ “Heavenly” Father carries more than the idea that he rules over a place called Heaven.

God as Heavenly Father makes the point that God is transcendent and high above “everything earthly,” and is used to show God’s absolute cosmic rule (Traub 1967:520). Further it shows that God has no spatial restrictions and thus “knows all things, sees all things, can do all things, and is thus accessible to all (p.520-521).” It is this idea of God as heavenly Father intimately knowing the needs of His disciples which is being put across.

The idea of God being a Father is not extended to every person (Schrenk 1967:910). While God is portrayed as good to all of creation, the word Father is reserved for

disciples, those who accept the teachings of Jesus (Schrenk 1967:91 0). The motif of God as Father and it's pertinence for Matthew 6:19-34 will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter.

The third reason related to the prohibition is found in verse 27 where Jesus ask rhetorically if His disciples can add one cubit to their stature by worrying (Talbert 2006:126). Cubit is translated from *pechus* (Unger and White 1985:140). *Pechus* refers to a measure of length the distance of a forearm. This is approximately just less than two feet.

Tasker (1971:77) reasons that cubit in verse 27 is better translated as referring to the length of life than height, as people are more likely to worry about the length of their lives than their height. Blomberg (1992:125) agrees with Tasker as he argues that while the reference to height is the "more natural translation" from the Greek, the idea of long life fits better with the concerns of food and clothing.

However Henry, (1960:1233) staying true to the natural translation of the text remains with the height metaphor and argues that one does not arrive at their height by one's own work, but by God's providence. It is apparent that *helikia* which translates to stature in Luke (which contains a similar saying) refers to height (France 1985:140).

However one could ask if such an extra length on a person's height is even something a person would want (France 1985:140)? France believes the context demands that an extra cubit of height is something that some one wants. It is the position of this thesis that is better to stay with the most natural translation from the Greek which is that Jesus is talking about adding extras height to one's physical stature.

There are a couple reasons for this. Firstly, while France's (1985:140) point above is noted, perhaps the context does not demand that some one would want so much extra height. It could be possible that people would not want that much extra height and so Jesus is showing how worry in this case is ridiculous.

Secondly, Henry's argument that our physical height falls under the realm of God's sustaining providence, fits the context. There is a middle ground worth noting. Lioy (2004:170) notes that whichever translation of *pechus* one prefers the point remains the same, "worry does not change things (Lioy 2004:170)."

One could say that implications attached to this reason are as follows:

- a) As one has no control over one's height, Jesus is saying that a reason that one should not worry, is that it is useless (Lioy 2004:170). There is no point in worrying about things that are clearly outside of the disciple's control.
- b) Worrying about areas of life where God is sovereign is an attempt to overthrow God's authority rather than trust God (Carter 2000:177).

The fourth reason related to the prohibition is found in verse 28-30 (Talbert 2006:126). This is where Jesus encouraged His disciples not to be anxious for clothing. He told them to examine the lilies of the field which do not toil nor spin, and yet Solomon was not arrayed as one of these.

This vegetation metaphor is used by Jesus to prohibit a disciple's anxiety over clothing (France 1985:141). Jesus again argues from the lesser to the greater, i.e. if God cares for lilies and grass He will clearly also care for His own (p. 140). Consider comes from *katamanthano* (Hill 1977:144). The implication is that one pays close attention with the aim to learn.

Lily is translated from *krinon* (Unger and White 1985:372). Lilies could include the gladiolus species which are found in wheat fields in Galilee. While the modern day reader cannot be sure if Jesus is referring to a specific species these plants would fit Jesus illustration well as when in bloom they bring fantastic colour to their environment, but also have a stem that when dried would be used well in ovens. The oven is in fact their final destination (Matt. 6:30).

Ryken, Wilhoit and Longman III (1998:294) say that it is common to use "lilies of the field," in a generic sense to refer to any good looking flowers. If flowers are considered in the generic sense, and thus not a specific type, the saying "flowers of

the field,” would then ‘balance, “birds of the air (Hill 1977:144).”

Fleming (Date unknown: 68) is more specific and says that the lilies Jesus refers to the very beautiful Huleh Lilies. How he arrives at this conclusion is not clear. By making a reference to lilies and then to grass, it seem best to accept lilies of the field as the generic for wild vegetation found in Galilee (France 1985: 141).

Jesus makes the point that not even Solomon was arrayed like one of these flowers (Matt.6:29). Scholars are in dispute as to whether this reference to Solomon is a positive or negative one. Solomon is well known for governing Israel during a time of abundant financial prosperity, Gerard von Rad notes the reign of Solomon was a “high point” in both Israel’s “culture and commerce (Longman & Enns 2008:734).”

Solomon was seen to the Jewish audience as the “foremost example of human glory (Lioy 2004:171).” That Jesus makes reference to Solomon arrayed in all his glory it appears like Jesus is masking a positive reference to the way Solomon could dress (Matt.6:29).

However as already noted Solomon is not always portrayed in a positive light and so it is worth exploring the idea that the reference to Solomon may be negative in nature. While he is shown as a King who ruled over a prosperous age in Israel’s history, he is also seen as a King whose (a) Integrity was at times in doubt and, (b) eventually ended up as an apostate (Provan 2000:788).

Further Carter (2000:179) shows that references to Solomon in Matthew up to this point in the Gospel are negative ones. He argues so for the following reasons:

- a) Every time (13 times before this one) the phrase “Yet I say to you” appears it introduces a “contrast.”
- b) Matthew 1:6-7 presents Solomon in a negative light.
- c) Jesus uses the personal pronoun “his” which shows that Solomon was pre-occupied with his own glory. The OT paints a picture of Solomon, a king who gains wealth not by trusting God, but by using “military conscription, forced labour, requisitioned property, heavy taxation and slavery (p.178).”

Perhaps the point is not to cast Solomon the man in a positive light, and perhaps it is not to cast Solomon in a bad light. The point could be that even Solomon (regardless of his moral disposition) in his glory and splendour can't compare to how God clothes the flowers of the field.

Jesus again asking a rhetorical question: that is if God so clothes grass of the field will He not much more clothe his disciples, which he refers to "O you of little faith (Matt.6:30)." The term "little faith," is used five times in Matthew and denotes a lack of trust in "*the extent of Jesus authority* (Brown 2002: 103-106)."

In this instance it is a lack of trust for Jesus to provide for daily necessities (Brown 2002:106). By Jesus using the term "little faith," He is not stating that the disciples have a complete lack of faith, but rather that their faith is "inadequate." Thus a disciple's worry shows that the disciple has "little faith (France 1985:141)."

### **5.2.2 Part Two – Matthew 6:31-33**

Part two of Matthew 6:25-34 is found in Matthew 6:31-33 (Talbert 2006:126). It is made up of a prohibition, two reasons for the prohibition, a command and a promise. The prohibition is found in verse 31. Here Jesus instructs His disciples not to worry about the questions of what they will eat or drink or wear.

The first reason related to the prohibition is found in verse 32a where Jesus notes that Gentiles seek these kinds of things (Talbert 2006:126). Jesus is clearly putting forward Gentile behaviour as something to be avoided. Gentile is translated from *ethnos* and is used in several ways through out Matthew's gospel, (Saldarini 1994:78). Firstly, it is used as a "descriptive word for non-Jews." When used as such the attitude of the text towards Gentiles is not negative (p.79-80). Thus this is not what Christ is referring to.

Secondly, *ethne* is used at times to refer to both Jewish and non-Jewish people (Saldarini 1994: 80). When used as such *ethne* can be translated as nations. A nation could be any "established people." Matthew at times uses the word to refer to

nations, which represent Jew and non-Jew who are “hostile to his (sic) group.” It can also be used to refer to a non-specific people group (Smillie 2002:74). Jesus has specific religious behaviour in mind when referring to Gentiles and so translating ethne as “nations” in Matthew 6:32 as Green (1986:742) does will not suffice.

Thirdly, Gentiles can be used to make a religious distinction. It can be used to refer to pagans as people outside of Israel’s religion or more harshly, as pagans as people who deliberately ignore revealed religion from God (Smillie 2002:74). It is in this light that Gentiles were referred to as the un-circumcised (Ryken et al 1998:324).

Circumcision was a sign for the Jews who were in a covenant with God (Ryken et al 1998:324). Thus Gentiles who were un-circumcised were outside of a covenant relationship with God, and were characterised as rebellious and disobedient to God’s ways (Ryken et al 1998:324). Gentiles were referred to as dogs (Ryken et al 1998:325). OT scriptures portray that dogs are “an utterly unclean animal.” By way of example Psalms 22:16 and Matthew 7:6 use dog imagery to describe “wicked people who attack God’s anointed (Blomberg 2007:30).”

As Jesus is making contrast between appropriate and inappropriate religious behaviour the third option, that of Jesus making religious distinction, is preferred (France 1985:141). Matthew 6:7 uses the same word, ethne, but instead translates it as heathens (Hagner 1993:164). In the NKJV Matthew 6:7 is translated as Gentiles rather than pagan/heathen. As Jesus is making a religious distinction it would be better if the word was translated as either pagans or heathen in 6:32 rather than Gentiles as found in the NKJV.

The point is then made that a trait of people who are not in covenant with, and who do not know the Heavenly Father is to worry about provision (France 1985:141). Idol worshipers in antiquity would in their anxiety pester their gods with their concerns for material goods. They would have lived in anxious fear as the fortunes of their lives were dependant on the whims of different gods who they needed to please in order for things to go well (Packer 1975:161).

The second reason related to this prohibition is found in verse 32b (Talbert 2006:126). I.e. the Heavenly Father is radically different from the gods of the pagans. The reason being is that the disciple's Heavenly Father knows that they need these things. As noted earlier by appealing to the disciples Heavenly Father the disciple is encouraged to trust the Father's intimate involvement in the disciple's life. The Father can be trusted to provide the necessities of His own (Powell 2000:877). Verse 33 will show that the Father can be trusted as such.

The command is found in verse 33a where Jesus instructs His disciples to "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." In verses 32 to 33 the word, "seek" appears twice. The Gentiles (now preferably translated as pagans) seek after food and clothing and Jesus admonishes the disciples not to seek after food and clothing, but to seek first His kingdom and righteousness.

Seek is translated from *zeteo* and is used here in the sense of "coveting earnestly," or "striving after (Unger and White 1985:558)." Thus the disciple can whole heartedly, like the pagans, pursue life's needs or have a whole hearted pursuit for God's Kingdom (Guelich 1982:344).

The word, "and" between "kingdom of God" and "His righteousness" is translated from *kai* (Schmidt 1988:176). *Kai* is "explicative rather than continuative" and so the two terms are parallel in that they define each other. As Talbert (2006:128) notes "God's righteousness and God's kingdom...amount to the same thing."

The next chapter of this thesis will examine the Mathaen themes of kingdom of God and righteousness in greater detail. For the purpose of this chapter it will suffice to say that the language of the text suggests that the "Kingdom of God" and "His righteousness" amount to the same things.

As to the question of what it means to seek God's Kingdom: The passage does not define any specific actions that relate to seeking. But the previous definition offered of *zeteo* and the definitions of His righteousness and Kingdom of God in the next chapter will point to any activity that leads to the establishment of God's will being

done.

The word “first” can be used either chronologically or in the sense of primacy (Schmidt 1988:177). *Proton* which translates as “first” is used twenty five times in Matthew: twenty three of the other twenty four times being used in a chronological way. The implication for Matthew 6:33 would then be that the disciple “gives time to the work of the kingdom before giving time to the work of material provision.” This could, for example, be a disciple giving a period or periods of her or his life to the work of the Kingdom and then returning to her or his respective trades.

However *proton* should be considered as primacy of priority and not in a chronological way (Schmidt 1988:177). Matthew 6:33 is similar in structure and theme to Matthew 23:26, which clearly has primacy in view. The question that follows is can a disciple then put aside the work of the Kingdom for even a second in order to make material provision?

If this is the case it is doubtful that many of the twelve or even the apostle Paul would qualify as a disciple, due to the fact that they had occupations which yielded an income (Schmidt 1988:178). Resolving the conundrum would be the fact that the distinction between holy and secular in Matthew is found in the motive (Matt 23:26). Thus it would not matter what the outward activity is, so long as the inward desire is primarily focused on God’s Kingdom (Schmidt 1988: 178).

The promise related to the command is found in verse 33b (Talbert 2006:126). The promise is seen by Jesus saying, “and all these things will be added to you.’ Powell (2000:877) indicates that this verse teaches that if a disciple puts “God’s kingdom and God’s righteousness first in their lives...” they will be provided for and so do not have to worry about tomorrow.

If that is the teaching, that is, that if a disciple who prioritises God’s Kingdom above all else, will find that she or he will not be found wanting, what is to be made of the passages of scripture which commends people for radical discipleship and describes them as “destitute” at the same time (Heb 11:37)? Further, there is evidence from

the scriptures that even the great apostle Paul, who had “unbounded” trust in God at times went hungry and at times had no place to stay (Hare 1992:75). Also, it has been observed that “birds do die from starvation, plants do wither in drought and human beings do die from lack of food and clothing (Davies 1993:63).”

Dray’s (1998:80) response would be that the reader should consider Jesus teaching in Matthew 6 the same way one would approach OT wisdom literature. I.e. wisdom literature makes observations about the world and then makes statements that are generally true but they are not “absolute rules,” and so cannot be applied to all circumstances. Thus there will be times when God’s people are in want, but it will be because God has a greater purpose in mind.

Jordan (1970:96-98) addresses the question as to where the provision comes from. I.e. how does God provide? His answer is that God’s provision comes from fellow members of the church. He points to the early church in the book of Acts that seemed to live in generosity towards each other’s needs. However Jordan goes beyond the text in addressing where the provision of needs comes from, and stating that the provision would come from fellow believers, rules out the possibility of God using a non believer’s wealth to care for his own.

### **5.2.3 Part Three – Matthew 6:34**

Part three is made up of a prohibition and two reasons (Talbert 2006:126). The prohibition is found in verse 34a. It is here that Jesus says that His disciples are not to worry about tomorrow. Hagner (1993:166) says that Jesus here broadens the scope of His prohibition to include all things in life that may make disciples worry about the future.

Considering that Jesus has been very definite in the items related to worry up to this point, this thesis will not adopt Hagner’s (1993:166) view that Jesus is broadening the command not to worry, to include all things in life that cause worry. While it is acknowledged that Philippians 4:6 Jesus does expect as much from His disciples, it remains the opinion of this author that Hagner is going beyond the scope of the text at hand.

The first reason not to worry about tomorrow is that tomorrow will worry about its own things (Talbert 2006:126). This first reason can be understood by realising that the next reason states clearly what this statement means (Hagner 1993:166). I.e. “each day has its own share of trouble and anxiety...let tomorrow (and all future days), so to speak, worry about itself.” Thus, once again a slight amendment would have to be made to Talbert’s outline. I.e. Talbert’s two reasons are making the same point . There are two separate sayings but one reason related to the prohibition.

Jesus is quoting a well know proverb when He says, “Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble (Meier 1980:67).” Trouble comes from *kakia*, and in this context it denotes the “evil of trouble, affliction (Unger and White1985:212).” *Kakia* is used through out the rest of the NT to denote evil in the moral sense of the word (Hendrickx 1984:147). Hendrickx says that here it refers to “material evil or calamities.”

However as it has already been shown that worry related to food and clothing amounts to idolatry it is fair to consider *kakia* as being considered in the moral sense of the word. The disciple by worrying would then be adding the moral evil of idol worship to the day.

The implication of these saying is then firstly that there is no room for worry in the present life of the disciple (Hendrickx 1984:147). Secondly, that worrying today would be adding unnecessary moral evil to an already troubled day.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

As with the previous chapter this chapter focused on an examination of the rhetoric, genre, composition, textual variants and key words and phrases in order to grasp the meaning of the passage. The following was uncovered.

In the first part of the second sub unit, Jesus is presented as speaking authoritatively as one greater than Moses. From this authoritative position He commands His disciples not to worry to the point of anxiety over items related to human survival, namely food, drink and clothing. This kind of anxious worry is the kind of worry that can obscure the disciple’s priorities. His reasons for this are firstly that life consists of

more than what one eats and wears. A point which Jesus not only teaches but lived out radically in Matthew 4 when He was tempted and went hungry in the desert.

Secondly He points to creation and argued that if God is concerned for lesser creatures He will surely be concerned for His disciples which are of more value. In doing so He does not dismiss prudent economic activity but affirms trust in God's goodness for provision. In affirming God's goodness to His disciples He teaches them that God is their Heavenly Father, the implication of which is that He is intimately involved in their lives and so is aware of their needs.

Thirdly, the points were made that worry is useless. It is also perhaps ridiculous and amounts to an attempt to control areas that in reality belong to God's sovereignty. Thus it amount to a lack of trust.

Fourthly, again Jesus argues from the lesser creation to the greater, this time pointing to flowers and grass as an example. In doing so Jesus makes a contrast between Solomon and the flowers of the field. His point that even Solomon the most financially prosperous in Israel's history couldn't compete with the way God clothes flowers. And if God clothes flowers like that surely He will look out for the clothing needs of His disciples.

The second part, like the first began with a command not to worry. Again, not to worry about food, drink and clothing. This time two reasons related to the prohibition were given. The first being that to worry about and thus run after these things is pagan behaviour. Pagans are idol worshipers who live in anxiety and fear of their gods. Thus anxious worry over items related to survival is idolatry.

Distinctions were made between the ways *ethne* is used in Matthew in order to arrive at pagan as a better translation for *ethne* in Matthew 6:32. This has added importance as it enables the reader to the reconcile the universalistic appeal of Matthew's gospel and the fact that sometimes Gentiles are displayed in a positive light within this gospel with the condemnation of gentile behaviour in this passage.

The second reason was that disciples have a Heavenly father and so they need not

live like and be anxious like Pagans. This worry would show a lack of trust and essential amount to idolatry. The point was made again that disciples have a Father intimately involved who knows their needs. Not so with pagan gods.

The second part then moved to the command to seek first God's kingdom and righteousness. It was seen that the two terms are parallel in meaning. Further it was shown that to seek first relates to primacy of priority over chronology. The disciple need not separate from their vocation as motive would define whether or not the activity is a seeking after God's Kingdom.

The second part is concluded with a promise that if the disciple does prioritise the seeking of God's Kingdom all their needs related to human survival will be met. This promise appears to clash with other evidence from scripture where devoted disciples are found themselves wanting. While God can be trusted to keep His promises, it appears the nature of the language points to the promise being conditional. Firstly, as a disciple actually needs to be seeking first God's Kingdom and secondly by God not having a greater purpose in mind.

Part Three began with the command not to worry about tomorrow. The reasons that followed showed that there is no room for worry in the present reality of the disciples and that to worry would be adding the moral evil of idol worship to an already troubled day.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **THEOLOGICAL MOTIFS OF MATTHEW 6:19-34**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The previous four chapters of this thesis conducted an analysis of the historical context of the text as well as an examination of the literary setting of the text. This chapter will conduct an examination of the theological motifs and themes found in Matthew 6:19-34 in order to assess how they contribute to an overall understanding of the passage.

The historical analysis, the literary analysis and the chapter at hand are working toward the goal of the next chapter. That is, to examine in light of the findings, what Matthew 6:19-34 teaches the relationship between the Christian disciple to money should be.

There are several prominent theological themes/motifs which are found in Matthew 6:19-34. The themes are as follows: Firstly, there is the theme of the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness. This was seen in Matthew 6:33 where Jesus instructs His disciples to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. These motifs were briefly mentioned in the previous chapters, but will be explored in greater detail in this chapter. God's kingdom and His righteousness will be explored under the same section in this chapter, as the literary analyses showed that Jesus was using them synonymously.

Secondly, there is the theological motif of the giver of the sermon. While it is beyond

the scope of this thesis to conduct a detailed Christology, examining the person and life of Jesus, particularly as it relates to His position of authority to give this sermon, will prove to enhance the understanding of Matthew 6:19-34.

The third motif to be explored will be the God of the sermon. Jesus through out the Sermon makes reference to God. Several times referring to Him as Father and also making reference to the providential way God works. It will be shown that the way Jesus spoke of God as Father and encouraged His disciples to speak of God as Father was unique in Judaism. Further references to God providing for His people would need to be understood in light of what a Jewish audience would have already known about the way God provides.

Fourthly, Jesus talking of laying up treasure in Heaven merited discussion in the literary analysis. Thus the theme of rewards for a disciple's obedience to God will be explored. Again this is a theme which was briefly touched upon briefly, but will be explored in greater detail here.

Fifthly, as was mentioned in the first chapter, the SOM is addressed to the Christian Disciple. Also, the historical context showed one of the purposes of the gospel of Matthew is instruction in discipleship. Thus the theme of Christian Discipleship and in particular how it is practised in the context of the church community will be explored. Further, the nature of what discipleship is intended to be will be explored.

## **6.2. The Theological Themes**

### **6.2.1 The Kingdom of Heaven and His Righteousness**

As Jesus in Matthew 6:33 instructs His disciples to seek first God's Kingdom and His Righteousness, the questions to be answered in this section are what is this kingdom and how does it look once it is found or arrived? Further highlighting the importance of this motif is that it was concluded in the literary analysis that by Jesus instructing His disciples to seek "first" the Kingdom He was advocating that they prioritise this activity over and above the accumulation of wealth. It was already stated in chapter 5 that the kingdom and God's righteousness were used synonymously in Matthew

6:19-34 and that this chapter would seek to more clearly define what the Kingdom is.

To begin with the New Testament makes reference to both the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Heaven (Matt.3:2; Mark 1:14). Matthew prefers to use Kingdom of Heaven over Kingdom of God (Lioy 2004:86). There are two possible reasons for this. Matthew may have been following the typically Jewish position of not mentioning the name of God. In Jesus time this was done by some to avoid attaching any sort of irreverence to God's name (Gundry1994:113). Secondly, by using Heaven it puts the focus on the "transcendence and sovereignty as well as active lordship and rule of God both in heaven and earth (Lioy 2004:86-87)."

Lioy (2004:87) favours the later view. He argues so by giving attention to the Greek noun *basileia* from which kingdom is translated (Lioy 22004:87). *Basileia* refers to the reign of God as a sovereign God. Thus by using kingdom of Heaven as opposed to Kingdom of God the focus is put on something of the nature of God's Kingdom, that of God's sovereign universal reign. Further, giving credence to this view, it is noted that there are times that Matthew uses God's name (Gundry 1994:113).

Jesus does not give a clear and concise definition as to what the kingdom of God is (Young 1995:75). Scholars have presented the following views as to what the Kingdom of God is: Firstly Weiss argued that the Kingdom of God is solely an eschatological term referring to the Day of Judgment (Young 1995:75).

Weiss's (Goppelt 1981:52) view argued that Jesus based His ideas on the Kingdom of God from Jewish apocalypticism, which taught that the Kingdom of God was imminent. It would come through a "cosmic catastrophe" and would happen "within that very generation." The moments in scripture where Jesus speaks about the kingdom of God in the present are in this view argued away by saying Jesus was having a moment of "prophetic enthusiasm."

Secondly, dispensationalists, similar to Weiss, have an eschatological take on the term (Young 1995:75-76). They argue for the Kingdom as something that will not appear until the millennium and the end of the church age. Thirdly, there is the Kingdom Now Movement (p.76). This view says that the kingdom of God is to be

established on earth in this present age. Those who hold this view maintain that the kingdom of God can be established by human effort which will in turn pave the way for the second coming of Jesus.

Fourthly, there is a widespread contemporary view of the Kingdom of God which views it as something which can be entered only once one dies (Young 1995:76). Clearly Jesus would disagree with this. Jesus, in the Lord's Prayer of Matthew 6:10 taught His disciples to pray for the kingdom to come on earth. Further as Bowden (2005:690) argues Luke 11:20 contains the story of Jesus casting out a demon, with Jesus making the point that if He does this enabled by God then the kingdom of God was present.

Ladd presented the idea of the Kingdom being already present and still to come, often referred to as the "already but not yet (Young 1995: 76)." The idea of God's Kingdom being a reality that is already present and still to come is the view that will be adhered to in this thesis. As just mentioned Jesus clearly believed and proved it to be a present reality. Jesus also taught the Kingdom as a future/still to come reality (Matthew 25:34).

That the Kingdom of God includes its present existence on earth nullifies the views held by Weiss and Dispensationalist. That it is also a future reality nullifies the view of the Kingdom Now Movement. Further the Kingdom Now Movement ignores that the age people live in now, that is the age before eternity will be imperfect. This is known as the scriptures look forward to eternity as a time will there be no more curse (Rev. 22:3).

The idea of the Kingdom being both present and future seems at best a paradox and at worst contradictory. Metzger (1992:148) helpfully resolves the contradiction and notes that scholars do not have to eliminate either the present or future aspect of the Kingdom. Metzger does this by examining the verbs associated with the Kingdom in the Gospels. The verbs show that God's Kingdom refers to the "reign" or "kingly rule" of God and not a physical territory. I.e. there is no point in asking whether or not the Kingdom is future or present as the Kingdom includes both realities.

It has now been established that The Kingdom of God is both a present and future reality. As mentioned before Jesus does give a clear concise definition as to what the Kingdom of God is. The idea of God's Kingdom, while not defined is found throughout the OT (Lioy 2004:87). The OT showed the following characteristics of God's Kingdom. Firstly it is shown in Psalms 145:13 that the Kingdom of God is eternal (Lioy 2004:87). Psalm 145:13 declares, "Your Kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion *endures* through out all generations."

Secondly, Psalm 103:19 showed that God's kingdom is "universal (Lioy 2004:87)." Here the Psalmist declares, "His Kingdom rules over all." Palmer (1986:18) notes that this "universal concept" of God's Kingdom was present even before the nation of Israel became a nationalised monarchy. The idea of God reigning over the universe was already established. The universal concept sees God as reigning over all life, objects, events and history. There is "no exception" to this reign of God.

The OT shows that there will be a time where all people recognise God's reign but until then it is only acknowledged by some (Lioy 2004:87). Lioy (2004:87) says that Jewish people acknowledged that God reigned in their day over all creation, but still prayed for a day when God's rule would be established unchallenged. This present reality of the kingdom and the future hope of the Kingdom to be acknowledged are seen to be continued in the person and work of Jesus. Thus one can conclude for God's kingdom to come His rule is to be acknowledged (Kee and Young 1986:118).

The NT is full of descriptions regarding the nature of God's Kingdom, i.e. what the Kingdom is like and how it works. It is worth a brief survey of some of these texts in order to better grasp the nature of what God's reign is like. I.e. how does the Kingdom that Jesus instructed His disciples to seek look and work. Matthew 25:34 shows that God's Kingdom is a gift and to gain entrance into the Kingdom is a gift that God alone can give and that one gains access to by believing (Lioy 2004:87). Even though it is a gift that is received through faith, there is a paradox in that "it can cost everything he or she has."

Matthew 13:31-33 contains the parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven (Young 1995:77-88). Both these parables show that the Kingdom grows progressively and

uninterrupted. The way a tiny mustard seed grows into a large bush and the way leaven can work through a batch of dough would both be seen as amazing feats, thus pointing to the supernatural nature of the growth of the Kingdom (p.77).

This supernatural feat is seen when one knows that the size of a mustard seed is comparable to a grain of salt, and the bush it grows into is large enough for birds to perch in its branches (Young 1995:78). Leaven does at times have a negative connotation. However rabbis have been known to use it in positive light (p79). Rabbi Joseph ben Levi compared the fermenting action of leaven to shalom, which is the “peace, harmony and wholeness in every aspect of human experience.”

When one gains entrance into the Kingdom one is known as a son (Matt.13:38).The sons of the Kingdom are people that will bear fruit (Matthew 13:23). Fruit in the NT is seen as transformed character as well as participating in good works that transform people’s lives (Gal 5:22 & Eph 5:9).

There is in this age people who seem to have entered the Kingdom, but at judgment will be revealed as unrighteous (Matt.14:412-43). It has already been said that the Kingdom may cost one everything. Further the parables of the hidden treasure and merchant seeking for pearls reveal that the Kingdom is also worth giving up everything for (Matt. 13:44-46).

Knowledge of the Kingdom is seen to be of great value (Matt.13:52). Jesus ends the Lord’s prayer by affirming that the Kingdom belongs to God (Matt.6:13). The Kingdom advances in this age with great force (Matt.11:12). It advances by God’s sovereign activity and does so with out any need to adhere to the principles that govern the Kingdoms of this world (John 18:36).

In conjunction with the preaching of the Kingdom Jesus and His disciples would heal sick and diseased people (Matt 9:35, Luke 9:2). To be found as a member of the Kingdom is a great privilege (Matt.11:11). Living under the reign of God is to experience righteousness, peace and joy (Rom. 14:17).

Knowledge of the Kingdom and how it works is a gift from God (Matt.13:11).The

Kingdom requires its citizens to have compassion on others (Matt.18:33). In the picture Jesus paints of final Judgment citizens of the Kingdom are portrayed as people whose lives were defined by their hospitality, compassion for the poor and care for those in prison (Matt. 25:35-40).

Obedience in the Kingdom requires personal sacrifice (Mark 9:47). In Mark 10:24 Jesus teaches His disciples that it is hard for people who trust in wealth to enter into His Kingdom. Disciples of Christ are co-labourers with God in the extension of His Kingdom (Col 4:11). Disciples are to live lives worthy of citizenship in Jesus' Kingdom (1 Thes 2:12). In Acts God speaks about the Apostle Paul and says, "For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My names sake," thus it follows that to be a citizen of the Kingdom may require one to suffer (Acts 9:16).

John's Gospel moves away from the idea of the Kingdom of God and replaces it with the idea of eternal life (Marshall 2004:581). John's Gospel describes eternal life as conscious and intimate communion with God, thus God's Kingdom includes disciples in communion with God (John 17:3).

As the literary analyses drew a contrast between the God of the Kingdom and pagan god's it is worth noting how the Kingdom is at times portrayed over and against evil. When Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God He portrayed it as the reign of God, "through which evil is defeated (Bowden 2005:690)." The literary analyses showed that the disciple can add the moral evil of idolatry to any given day by unnecessary worry over material wealth. Thus the advancement of God's Kingdom would see this moral evil defeated.

Marshall (2004:61) notes that the scriptures also use kingdom terminology to refer to Satan and his kingdom. Marshall then concludes that as Jesus is using Kingdom terminology it includes the implication that there is "an invasion and the recovery of territory and people from the enemy who controls them." Jesus does at times use war like terminology when He talks of delivering captives.

Marshall (2004:61), rightly goes on to note that people are not portrayed as passive captives, but are "to some extent" willing to be captive. The positive response to

Jesus' call to repent would release them from captivity. Perhaps the pertinence for this thesis is then that a disciple is through the advancement of God's Kingdom, free from anxiety of material wealth. This idea will be explored in the synthesis of findings in the next chapter.

Righteousness is translated from "*dikaiosune* (Unger and White 1985:535)." It is used to refer to actions that conform to God's sovereign will. Something Jesus expected from His disciples even before the coming consummation of His Kingdom (Matt.28:20). As to be expected by the explicative *kai*, the definitions of "His righteousness" and "God's Kingdom" essentially amount to the same thing. That is God's kingdom and righteousness refers to God's Will being established.

### **6.2.2 The God of the Sermon**

Marshall (2004:121) says it is logical that after considering the kingdom of God, to consider the nature of the "God of the Kingdom." Therefore that is the order to be followed here. In the literary analysis of chapter five it was noted that Matthew's favourite title for God is "Heavenly Father." It was concluded that one of the reasons why Jesus' disciples need not worry about daily provision necessary for survival was that the term Heavenly Father implies that God is benevolent and intimately involved with their lives and is aware of, and able to, provide for their needs.

As mentioned in Chapter five the theological motif of God as Father will be examined in greater detail here. Further the way God works is alluded to in Matthew 6:19-34 and so some attention will be paid to His providential work. Also, a Father-son relationship between God and the disciple will show to carry implications on the nature of discipleship.

Addressing God as Father occurs frequently in the NT. The Gospel of John refers to God as Father more often than referring to God as God (Juel 1997:315). Metzger (1992:145) says that the Gospel of John has 120 references to God as Father, and Matthew has 44 references to God as Father. Speaking of God as Father is used by Paul in several of his letters (Juel 1997:319). For example 1 Corinthians 1:3 sees Paul writing, "Grace and Peace from God our Father." Similar references to God as

“our Father,” i.e. the Father of the disciple can be seen in the opening addresses of Ephesians, Philippians, Galatians, Colossians, Thessalonians etc.

This position, the privileged position of the individual being able to relate to God as Father was not accepted as common place in Judaism until Christ (Metzger 1992:145). The OT presents God as Father as a “national” connotation for the Israelite people, in that He became the nation’s Father by calling them and separating them from other nations (Metzger 1992:145, Dobschütz 1914:303). This is seen in Deuteronomy where Israel is referred to as “chosen” and a “special people (Deut. 14:2).”

There are a couple of occasions in the OT scriptures where God as a Father is put in reference to individuals (Metzger 1992:145). For example Psalm 103:13 reads, “As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him.” Perkins (1985:333-334) notes the general rule is that Jewish prayer would not have addressed God in such a familiar tone (Perkins 1985: 333-334).

There would have been people who would have done so, but they would have been seen as the exception to the rule (Perkins 1985:334). Perkins (p.334) says that such people would have been seen as having some sort of special and favoured relationship with God and that Jesus’ teaching on God as Father, is exceptional in that He taught His followers to address God in such a familiar way .

In contrast to Perkin’s opinion is Goshen-Gottstein (2001:475-476), who says that there is nothing extra-ordinary about the few occurrences of God as Father to the individual. Fatherhood when used by individuals in the Israelite community would be used so, as an extension of the role of God as Father of the nation (Goshen-Gottstein 2001: 475-476). Thus for Goshen-Gottstein this does not denote any special favour to the individual.

Goshen-Gottstein seems to have a point in that one can argue that Israel as a Nation enjoyed a special favoured relationship with God as Father (Deut 14:2). If one accepts that these individual pre-Christ who related to God as Father did so as an extension of the Nations relationship, it would make sense that it also comes across

as special.

Metzger (1992:145) notes two differences between the way the OT and intertestamental literature speak of God as Father compared to the way Jesus spoke of God as Father. Firstly, (as already mentioned) Jesus refers to God as Father with great frequency, and secondly Jesus referred to God as Father with a “degree of tenderness and warmth.”

It should be noted that Rabbinic literature does contain examples of God as Father being tender (Goshen-Gottstein 2001:476). However the overwhelming slant of the meaning of God as Father in rabbinic literature, is Israel’s obligation of obedience and awe to their Father.

To make the point of how affectionate the idea of God as Father was used by Jesus, one may summarise from Mark 14:36 that Jesus in his “mother-tongue” would have used the word *abba* for Father (Metzger 1992:146). *Abba* can mean either daddy or father. It was used by children to refer to their father. The word *abbi* which is derived from *abba* is more formal and means “My Father.” *Abbi* would have been used by rabbis of Jesus time as it would have been considered irreverent to refer to God as *abba* as it would be too “familiar and intimate.”

Dobschütz: (1914:303) notes that the address of Father is the address given by a child to the person who has the best interest at heart, and who is willing to help them. The prodigal son addressing his Father in Luke 15:21 was put forward as an example. Here one sees a Father all too willing to act in the best interest of his repentant son.

Jesus teaches His disciples that they too can relate to God in this intimate way (Green 2000:41). For example in the Lord’s Prayer, which forms part of the SOM Jesus teaches the disciples to pray, “Our Father (Green 2000:41).” Also Matthew 11:27 claims that Jesus alone can reveal who the Father is (Green 2000:41). Thus Christians have the privilege of calling God, Father, as a “derivative” of the Father – Son relationship that exists between Jesus and God (Juel 1997:319). It is a relationship that is “spiritual rather than based on creation (Marshall 2004:100).”

It must be noted that the Father-Son relationship Jesus has with God stands as unique in the history of the world (Green 2000:40). Matthew's Gospel presents Jesus as God's son. This seen as Matthew 1:18 teaches the reader that Jesus was not conceived by any human Father, but by God.

That God is presented as Father has the connective idea that followers of Christ are also sons of God (Combrink 1983:90). For example Matthew 5:9 records that disciples will be known as sons of God. Followers of Christ are also taught in Matthew to relate as brothers. The theme of the "brotherhood" of God's people is a central conceptual link in the concept of covenant as taught in Deuteronomy. That disciples are a spiritual family type community united through faith in Christ will be explored in point 6.2.5 below.

In the literary analyses God as a benevolent Father was put in contrast to the gods of pagans. This would appear to be a teaching that goes contrary to the claim of God's Fatherhood being universal. I.e. do all people have claim to God as Father? There is one occurrence in the gospels where Jesus talks to the "general public" and refers to God as Father (Metzger 1992:146). This is found in Matthew 23:9. The remainder of the records of Jesus teaching, God as Father is reserved for Jesus and for Jesus' disciples (Metzger 1992:146). Thus it seems that only followers of Christ have the privilege to call God Father.

Matthew 6:19-34 makes several references to the way God works. The way or nature in which Jesus taught His disciples to relate to God as Father was unique for it's time. However the providential workings of God in nature and to supply for His people presented in Matthew 6:19-34 would have been a typically Jewish idea.

The Jewish community would know from the OT scriptures that material provision ultimately comes from God. Deuteronomy 8 recounts the story of God leading Israel in the desert where God allowed them to hunger and then supernaturally fed them with manna (Deut.8:1-20). He did this so that they would know "man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of God." The passage also makes the point that even when here is no apparent supernatural intervention on God's behalf it is still God who provides as He gives the ability to

produce wealth.

### **6.2.3 The Giver of the Sermon**

As mentioned it is beyond the scope of this thesis to embark on a detailed analysis of Christology, but clearly there needs some attention paid to the giver of the Sermon. Jesus is designated as the Messiah or the Greek language equivalent, the Christ (Green 2000:39). Messiah or Christ means, “anointed one.” Israel as a nation was familiar with the anointed roles of prophets, priests and kings. Israel was expecting a Messiah that would embody these three offices of ministry.

It was stated in the previous chapter that in Matthew 6:19-34 Jesus assumed the right to speak prophetically about the ways of God. Matthew 16:14 and 21:11 designates Jesus as a prophet, but also notes that this designation does not suffice, He is clearly more than a prophet (Green 2000:40). Dunn (2009:54) argues that Mark 6:4 shows that Jesus believed that he was a prophet and this role was “appropriate to his (sic) mission.” Enforcing this idea is the historical context of chapter two which showed Jesus in parallel to Moses, both ascending a mountain to bring God’s word to His people.

Hebrews teaches that Jesus fulfilled the role of a Priest (Heb 4:15). Of interest to this thesis is that Jesus as Priest signifies that Jesus is able to sympathise with a disciple’s weakness, and was tempted as disciples are. Chapter two showed that Jesus was, at least for a time (perhaps his whole life) from a poor family and knew what it was like to be in want and short of money.

That Jesus, who is the embodiment of how discipleship should look, would have known the reality of suffering in regard to material possessions is significant. Especially as this will affect the expectation attached to the content of the Sermon. For example, can the loyal disciples expect no suffering related to material wealth? Clearly they can.

Some attention has already been paid to Jesus as King. It was noted previously that Jesus is God’s King come to establish God’s Kingdom on earth. Worth adding is that

Matthew 25:31-36 presents Jesus as a King who presides in Judgment over all nations (France 1994:221). Thus the giver of the SOM is also the one who will act as judge to its demands.

Further, Matthew makes it plain that the hope of God's King who would establish God's Kingdom arrived in the Person Jesus (Matt 1:1). Matthew's genealogy promotes Jesus as having legitimate right to Israel's throne (France 1994:221). To further drive this point home Matthew records Jesus as the son of David seven times in his gospel (France 1994:222). The Messiah King was expected to be from Davids line (Psalm 89:3-4). Previously it was noted that Jesus as this King led His people out of captivity to sin. The sin pertinent to this thesis would be the anxiety related to lack of trust in God.

Jesus is often presented as a teacher. That scholars (both believers and non believers) are still studying His words today is an accolade to how remarkable a teacher He was. Within the Gospels the title of teacher is the title which is given to Jesus the most (Dunn 2009:54). Jesus teaching style was seen to come in the tradition of the OT wisdom tradition. Dunn's point must be noted. The reason being, as noted in the literary analysis is He taught in a style that in some ways was typical of a Jewish teacher, the elements of which affect the understanding of Matthew 6:19-34.

Matthew presents the reader with the fact that "God is present in Jesus (Powell 1998: 76)." The birth narrative in Matthew shows that Jesus is called Immanuel which is translated "God is with us (Mt 1:23)." More than God just being present in some sort of special way, Christian doctrine affirms that Jesus was God Himself. As Driscoll and Breshears (2008:14) state, Jesus, "repeatedly and emphatically declaring himself to be God."

Three aspects from NT teaching will suffice to affirm Jesus divinity. Firstly people worship Jesus. In Matthew worshipping Jesus is synonymous with worshipping God (Powell 1998:76). Jesus declares in Matthew 4:10 that people are to only worship God. The word for worship is translated from *proskyneo*. People on several occasions *proskyneo* Jesus and it is condoned.

Secondly Jesus is described as, “*kyrios*, (Green 2000:40).” *Kyrios* is translated as Lord (Green 2000:40). It is a word which can be applied in various ways (Green 2000:40). It can appear as noted earlier in this thesis as a formal title. However when used by the disciples in Matthew it has “nuances of divinity (Green 2000:40).”

The Apostles who wrote the NT used *kyrios* to ascribe divinity to Christ (Erickson 2004:706). This is seen by the fact that in the Septuagint Jehovah is translated as Lord, and the apostles when teaching on Jesus reference OT scriptures to refer to Christ as Lord. An example is seen in 1 Peter 3:15 where Peter references Isaiah 8:13. The Apostle Paul does the same. Paul writes a poem in Philippians 2:6-11 where he makes reference to a passage in the Septuagint (Isa 45:23) where the exclusivity of God and his claim on monotheism is made. Paul makes Christ both “equal” and “identical” with this God.

Thirdly, Jesus’ title as Son of God points to His Divinity. It has also already been stated that Jesus occupies a unique position as Son of God. This is a title that serves to affirm Jesus divinity. One example will suffice. In Matthew 26:64-66 shows Jesus claims under oath that he is the Son of God. It was this claim and the implications thereof that brought the charge of blasphemy from Religious leaders. Further, John 5:2-18 shows that Jesus making the claim that God is His Father is understood to be a claim on equality with God (Erickson 2004:705).

#### **6.2.4 Rewards for Obedience to God**

The Literary analysis of chapter four explored the idea of treasures in heaven. It was concluded that the disciple, out of obedience to God, in matters relating to material wealth, is able to store up treasures in heaven which were seen to be both a present and future/eternal reality.

The protestant orthodox view holds that rewards include the future reality of rewards which are to be enjoyed by the believer in eternity (Blomberg 1992:159). The degree to which the believer enjoys Heaven is dependant on the extent to which they have reached maturity in the Christian walk as well as to the degree that have obeyed God. For a couple reasons, that rewards will also be given in eternity is not

unanimous among scholars. These reasons need to be examined as the response to them will affect the disciple's attitude to Jesus teaching regarding rewards, which of course will show to have pertinence to Matthew 6:19-34.

The first reason scholars take exception to such a view is pointed out by Blomberg (1992:159). Blomberg (1992:159) takes exception to this eternal idea of rewards as he believes it teaches that believers in eternity will be differentiated from one another on the basis of rewards. Blomberg (p.160) believes that there is no evidence in the New Testament that supports the idea of believers being differentiated from each other, based on the performance as a Christian during their time on earth. Further he believes that such a view would have negative consequences on the psychology of the believer.

As Heaven is a place where there is joy, peace, no sorrow etc, scholars ask the question as to whether or not varying degrees of reward will not lead to people being reminded of past failures and having regret (Erickson 2004:1241)? Further, much of the descriptions of believers in their eternal state relates to doing the same kind of activities. Erickson makes an attempt to resolve this conflict by speculating that believers will have "subjective awareness." i.e. while all would engage in the same activities, some would "enjoy it much more than others." The thinking here is that as no one will be aware as to how much the next person is enjoying Heaven there will be no place for regret (p.1242).

Blomberg's view that there are no degrees of reward in Heaven won't stand. There will be degrees of reward in eternity for the believer (Erickson 2004:1241). Luke 19:11-27 makes this obvious. In Luke 19:11-27 it is clear that some disciples are rewarded more than others for faithfulness in service to God. Also Daniel 12:3 seems to project a special reward for those who are wise and who lead many to righteousness. It is best then to accept that there are degrees of reward in heaven. And perhaps, like Erickson, to speculate that as there is no grief and sorrow in Heaven, the awareness of various degrees of joy will be a "subjective awareness (Erickson 2004:121)."

The second reason scholars take exception to the teaching of rewards (notably this

includes present and eternal rewards) is that by giving the promise of reward, the question has been posed as to whether or not Jesus is promoting “prudent self-betterment (Metzger 1992:164)?” The accusation that follows, is surely Jesus should have promoted virtue for virtues sake, and not for the hope of reward.

Metzger (1992:164) deals with this kind of accusation by paying attention to what Jesus taught about the nature of rewards. Metzger looks at Matthew 6:20 and reads it as saying Jesus is teaching His disciples to learn to value the things that Heaven values. Thus the reward is found in the activity of obedience (Metzger 1992:165).

By way of example Metzger (p.164-165) looks to Matthew 5:6 where the reward for hungering and thirsting after righteousness is righteousness itself. Further the one who searches after righteousness wouldn't expect anything else as a reward. Jesus taught in Luke 17:17-10 that His followers have no right to expect thanks from God (Metzger 1992:165).

Metzger then summarised his view on the matter by saying, “in short, Jesus promises reward to those who are obedient to God's will without thought of reward (Metzger 1992:165).” He arrives at this conclusion by paying attention to Matthew 25:31-46, which paints a picture of the last judgement, where people who are rewarded with eternal life are unaware of righteous acts they performed to receive rewards, and people who are found wanting are shown to be people who would not act unless there was prospect of reward.

### **6.2.5 Discipleship and Community**

The motif of discipleship, has been grouped with the concept community in this section, for a couple reasons. Firstly, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Jesus expected discipleship to be lived out in the context of community. Secondly, and as an application of discipleship in community, the literary analyses showed a disciple is expected to show allegiance to God through their generosity to others. Thus discipleship (at least to some degree) in Matthew 6:19-34 must be understood in the context of community.

Unger and White (1985:171) note that the word “disciple” comes from the word *manthano* and means literally “to learn (Unger and White 1985:171).” However more than just being one who learns John 6:66 and Luke 6:17 make the point that in a general way when people became disciples of Jesus they became His “adherents.” That is adherents not just to his teachings but also to His person.

Senior (1997:63) echoes this sentiment when he says that Jesus is presented in Matthew as the ultimate example of how the Christian life is to be lived. As Senior notes, Jesus actions and responses can be seen as “models for authentic discipleship.” By following their master a disciple carried the goal of becoming like Him (Wilkins 1992:187).

Wilkins (1992:187) argues that discipleship to Jesus differed to that of discipleship to other Rabbis, in that while other disciples had the goal of eventually having disciples that would follow them, Jesus disciples would remain committed to Jesus their entire lives. This view is supported by The Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20). While admittedly here disciples are instructed to make disciples, it is note worthy that it is disciples of Christ they are making. This life long commitment to Jesus is further supported by the fact that Jesus Kingdom and reign over His people was shown to be eternal.

The first theological motif examined was that of God’s Kingdom. As the Kingdom implies God’s rule, it follows that a King rules over people (Marshall 1992:123). God Kingdom carries the idea that there are a group of people who have their allegiance to God as King. Matthew’s Gospel shows that Jesus “anticipates the development of community life among them (Marshall 2004:126).” This community “formed the basis of the church that developed after Easter and Pentecost (Marshall 1992:122)”

The word church comes from *ecclesia*. Ellingsen (1983:118) says that *ecclesia* carries the literal meaning of “called out.” Ellingsen says that the word *ecclesia* originally referred to a gathering of Greek citizens who gathered for civil matters. However while it is true that *ecclesia* was used for a gathering of Greek citizens, the reference to *ecclesia* may have significance from something much earlier.

The Hebrew equivalent to *ecclesia* is *qahal* and like *ecclesia* refers to a gathering (Clowney 1988:140). Except in the OT it refers to the gathering of God's people, that is the people of God who gathered to make covenant with God and the further at later times gathered as God's Covenant People.

Whether Jesus had the gathering of Greek citizens in mind, or was creating a parallel with the gathering of God's Covenant People is not clear. This thesis will assume that it is more likely a reference to *qahal* in the OT. The reason being is that it was shown Jesus came to create this community called the Church and He also established a covenant with it (Mt 26:28). However the pertinence for the matter at hand is that the church's existence implies that disciples gather together. There is an established community.

There are two instances in Matthew where the word *ecclesia* is used (Marshall 1992:122). These are the only times in the Gospel records that the word is used. It is found in Matthew 18 and is used in reference to disciples who meet around the cause and purposes of Christ (Marshall 1992:123). Marshall (1992:124) notes that this is exactly what *ecclesia* is used to portray, a gathering of disciples in the name of Jesus.

*Ecclesia* is used again in Matthew 16:18 which once again enforced the idea of Jesus creating a new congregation which belongs to Him (Marshall 1992:124). This time there is the added idea that forces of evil will advance against this community of believers. It is Jesus' community and it is based on a truth regarding a revelation of who He is.

The NT has a lot to say regarding how the Church is to look and act. Once again a brief survey of several scriptures will suffice to better understand the nature of the church community. The survey is not conclusive but includes characteristics of the church community that will prove to have pertinence for the synthesis of the next chapter.

The Apostle Paul talked about the Church as the Body of Christ (Ellingsen 1983:118). Ephesians 1:23 and 1 Corinthians 12:12 depict the church as having

interdependent interpersonal relationships. The Church is made up of disciples who have each been gifted by God to serve the other (1 Pt 4:10). Further the Church as a community is to make God known (1 Pt 2:9, 4:10). It is a community that is to be recognisable by the love its members have for one another (John 13:35).

Matthew 18 is a classic passage in presenting a vision of how the church community of disciples is to look (Senior 1997:65). This passage teaches that the believing community is to show an authentic concern for the disposition of the less fortunate as well as practice, “abundant forgiveness.” Paul’s teaching shows that the Church and her members were people in the process of being made holy, and were people that are to “demonstrate their status as God’s restored people by living holy lives (Marshall 2004:445-446).”

Jesus uses lots of communal type imagery in describing the believing community (Marshall 1992:123). Of pertinence is the family type description Jesus gives to the believing community. They are in Matthew 3:34-35 described as members of Jesus own family. In Matthew 23:8 Jesus advises that the believing community are to regard each other as siblings. Further Mark 10:29 Jesus expects His followers to have a greater allegiance to Him over and above what they would have to their immediate physical family.

Also worth mentioning is that discipleship, for some disciples, for example the apostles, the cost of discipleship was high (Wilkins 1992:187). They had to literally give up everything to follow Jesus. However this kind of radical demand was not made to all disciples. It was made to some who were not part of the inner circle of 12 (the apostles). It should be said that all disciples should embody an attitude that is prepared to give up everything for Jesus (Mt 8:18-12 & Lu14:25-33). Further, as noted in the Historical analyses the idea that one may have to give up a lucrative living to follow Christ would have been depicted by the tax collector apostle and author of Matthew who would have done exactly that.

Disciples are in the NT portrayed as stewards. While the word for steward does not appear in Matthew, the theological motif is found in Matthew’s Gospel (Powell 1995:89). A steward is one who is entrusted with looking after the household of his

or her Master. Three of the chief texts of scripture used in NT studies to define the nature of stewardship are found in Matthew, namely Matthew 21:33-43, 24:45-51, 25:14-30.

The above mentioned parables while not containing the word for steward, which is *oikonomos* do teach the idea (Powell 1995:89). Matthew's Gospel understands stewardship in light of God's universal reign (p.90). I.e. as God reigns over the universe and all things belong to God, the disciple is seen as trusted with God's property. The disciple is seen as totally dependant on God for everything (p.91).

Further, it was mentioned in the introduction to this chapter that God as Father carries implications for discipleship. The idea of God as Father is one that would re-enforce the disciple's role as a steward (Goshen-Gottstein 2001:476). God as Father in Judaism often carried the idea that the disciple is responsible for the conduct of his or her life to God. This is a parallel with the way a human father's child would live life with obligations to his or her father.

Powell (1995:93) says that Matthew teaches the motive for good stewardship should come from a sense of duty. It is however, a sense of duty rooted in and expressed from gratitude. This gratitude comes from "Awareness that all things come from God." This providential provision was noted earlier as something that the Jewish community would have had integrated into their world view.

Powell (1995:95-98) notes several principles of stewardship as portrayed by Matthew:

- a) "*God's stewards have only one master* (p.95)." Matthew 6:24 is put forwards as a proof text. Further this emphasises the OT moral law that teaches God's people about the exclusivity of their worship of God.
- b) "*God's stewards acknowledge their master in word and deed* (p.96)." Mathew 7:1 makes the point that acknowledging Jesus as Lord is not enough; the disciple is to move to deeds to express obedience (p.96-97).
- c) "*God's stewards prove themselves worthy of their master's trust* (p.97)."

Also worth noting is the three parables in Matthew that teach on stewardship provide

examples of how a disciple may prove untrustworthy (Powell 1995:97). Firstly the disciple could decide to usurp God's authority and attempt to keep what actually belongs to God. Secondly, the disciple can get lethargic and lazy and live as if she or he will not give an account of the stewardship. Finally, the disciple can live in absolute fear of God to the point she or he does nothing with what God has given them.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

This chapter undertook an examination of the main theological motifs present in Matthew 6:19-34. This was necessary as it contributes to the overall understanding of the passage. The findings in this chapter will in the next be considered along with the literary and historical analysis in order to draw conclusions as to what Matthew 6:19-34 teaches about the relationship of the Christian disciple to money.

The main theological motifs drawn from Matthew 6:19-34 were a) God's Kingdom and His Righteousness, b) the God of the sermon, c) the giver of the sermon, d) rewards for obedience to God and finally, e) discipleship and community. God's Kingdom was shown to be God's reign over all history and creation. It is a reign that in the present is not always acknowledged. Wherever God's reign is acknowledged His Kingdom is present. A brief survey outlining descriptions of how the Kingdom looks and works was conducted. It was shown that for a disciple to seek God's Kingdom in her or his own life includes seeking personal actions that conform to God's will.

Disciples are to relate to God as Father in as much as He is sovereign and reigns over all and is intimately involved with their lives. He is a benevolent Father who cares for their needs. As sons of God disciples are a spiritual family united through Faith in Christ. The Jewish audience of the SOM would be familiar with the idea that all provision and ability to make provision comes from God.

Jesus is the Messiah. The Messiah fulfilled the anointed roles of prophet, priest and king. Jesus exercised His right to speak prophetically, but was more than a prophet.

As priest Jesus is able to sympathise with a disciple's weakness. As King Jesus established God's reign on earth and will reside in Judgment over all the nations of the world. Jesus was a teacher who taught in the OT wisdom tradition. However more than just a Teacher, a Prophet, Priest or a King, Jesus is presented as God Himself.

Rewards for obedience to Christ are both a present and eternal reality. The promise of rewards coincides with Jesus teaching disciples to value what God values. An implication of which is, that rewards are then promised to those who obey God with no thought of reward.

Disciples are people who follow and adhere to the person Jesus with the goal of becoming like Him. It is a life long event. Discipleship is lived out in the church community which is also the disciple's spiritual family. The Church is a "divinely instituted community (Marshall 1992:124)." It is created by and belongs to Jesus. The Church is a spiritual family whose members are to prioritise relationships with one another.

Discipleship may or may not require a disciple to give up everything in the cause of following Jesus, but it always requires an attitude whereby one is prepared to do so. As God is the sovereign King and everything belongs to Him, disciples are seen as stewards of God's possessions. As stewards, disciples are to respond faithfully in trust to God, with whatever God has given her or him. By not administering well what God has given a disciple, the disciple is in fact acting to usurp God's authority.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Conclusion**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

The previous chapters of this thesis have conducted a historical analysis, literary analysis and an examination of the theological motifs of Matthew 6:19-34. The reason for this is that an understanding of the above have contributed to an overall understanding of Matthew 6:19-34 and have proved essential in addressing the main problem of this thesis.

This chapter will accomplish the following tasks. Firstly, there will be a synthesis of the findings of the previous chapters in order to address the main problem of the thesis. Included in this will be suggestions as to the application of the findings. As stated in chapter one exegesis won't be considered complete until there is practical application. Secondly, there will be an assessment of the hypothesis, and finally there will be suggestions as to future areas of research.

#### **7.2 Synthesis of the Research**

The synthesis of findings to clarify the main problem will be explored under the following headings

- Money as a Rival God
- The accumulation of wealth
- Stewardship of Money as a community affair

### **7.2.1 Money as a Rival God**

When Jesus addressed the issue of material wealth in Matthew, the literary analysis did not show that Jesus was referring to money explicitly. However, in Jesus addressing the relationship between His disciples and material wealth it was noted that money was implied. Further, this point was strengthened in chapter two when it was concluded that Jesus' historical context was monetised. Money was changing hands. And as shown, by way of example, basic money principles like supply and demand were in place.

Thus money was considered in Jesus time as a form of wealth. Of pertinence to the exegesis of the passage, money was a measure of wealth in Jesus' day and is still very much a measure of wealth today. Further, money is used to purchase basic necessities used in this modern day survival. This last point is worth noting as it was shown in the literary analysis that the kind of worry Jesus addressed, was the kind that stems from anxiety related to human survival.

A synthesis of the findings shows that there are two aspects of money as a rival god worth noting. Firstly, while this thesis examined a debate from scholars as to whether or not mammon should be considered the personal name for a pagan god of wealth, the literary analysis did show that regardless of where one stands on the issue money was definitely presented as a rival god to the disciples' Heavenly Father.

In the literary examination of the three sayings found in Matthew 6:19-24, it was concluded that money can challenge for a disciples allegiance that should belong to God. I.e. money becomes a rival to God. In fact it was concluded that the language suggested that there were disciples who were prioritising accumulation of wealth over and above service to God. Something Jesus was commanding them to stop doing. Although only the "two kinds of treasure" metaphor went as far as to personify money as rival God, all three dealt with the issue of allegiance to God.

That the literary analysis portrayed Jesus as expecting disciples to stop prioritising

the accumulation of wealth over and above service to God is consistent with the nature of the SOM portrayed in chapter one. The SOM was presented as having demands that Christian disciples are able to obey as opposed to views on the SOM that portrayed it as impossible ideals.

Further, the historical analysis showed that the gospel of Matthew provided definition for the Christian movement. Of pertinence here is that it was shown to include a continuing relevance of the Decalogue. To displace one's allegiance to God with an allegiance to money would be considered a violation of the first command, which commands God's people to the exclusivity of worship of Him.

The theme of Money presenting itself as a rival god continued throughout the rest of Matthew 6:19-34. The literary analysis showed that when Jesus instructed His disciples to seek first God's Kingdom, it was not a matter of chronology but of priority: The lack of prioritising God and running after the accumulation of wealth was shown to be behaviour that characterises idol worshipers that live in fear of their gods. I.e. once again the literary analysis drove home the point of the exclusivity of allegiance to God that is expected of the Christian disciple.

Further the literary analysis made the point that the anxiety that results from un-trust in God was shown to add to the moral evil of idol worship to any given day. It should be noted that the literary analysis showed that by Jesus telling them they were of little faith, showed that it was not a complete lack of faith on the disciple's part. I.e. insufficient faith in God results in anxiety and thus in idolatry. Also, the theological themes of both the God of the SOM and Jesus, the giver of the Sermon portrayed the supremacy of God over all creation.

Also to note was that the demand on the Christian disciple to neglect allegiance to money in favour of allegiance to God, came to the disciple regardless of her or his financial disposition. The historical analyses showed that Matthew was written in what was more than likely a prosperous urban area. Also, Jesus was seen to be some, if not all of his life poor, and at best case scenario achieved a modest level of existence.

It has now been shown that a synthesis of the historical, literary and theological analyses all showed that Money can be presented as a rival god to the Christian. An application for the modern day believer would be to heed Christ's command and to stop prioritising the accumulation of wealth at the expense of Christ and His Kingdom. As Jesus in Matthew 6:19-34 does not give hands on practical advice on how to do this, one could ask how one would know whether or not they are neglecting their allegiance to Jesus?

Two points concluded from the literary analysis could answer this question. Firstly, if one's life is characterised by anxiety over items pertinent to human survival, then one would know they are in a position of "little faith" and are essentially acting pagan. Secondly one can ask the question as to whether her or his life is characterised by a seeking of God's Kingdom.

The second aspect of money as a rival god is that God and money were presented as two radically different gods. God was presented in the literary and theological analyses as an all knowing benevolent Father who is keenly aware of the needs of His people. He was shown to have sovereign reign over all events and history.

While not much of a description was given to money as a god, the differing consequences of allegiance to God and money were noted, thus hinting towards the kind of master money makes: The worship of money results in accumulating transient treasures that will not last, as opposed to the eternal treasures stored in God's Kingdom.

The worship of money would lead to a life that neglects the needs of others in need. It was noted in the literary examination of Matthew 6:22-23 that allegiance to God can be expressed through generosity. Thus worship of money is degenerate for the believers. The degenerate experience was seen in the metaphor of the bad eye, which shows that neglect of allegiance to God, in favour of worship of money, creates a stingy person.

The worship of money was also shown to potentially create a person who is deceived into thinking they are in fact good stewards with the wealth God has given

them. The historical analyses highlighted how some of the wealthy in the Jewish community exploited the poor. Thus stinginess and greed further degenerates the person as they become a perpetrator adding to the loss of human dignity.

Conversely the disciple who was shown to prioritise God through generosity to others was shown to have a life characterised by purity, truth, blessing and revelation. Further Matthew 6:25-34 showed a life lived in allegiance to God as one characterised by the alleviation of unnecessary anxiety. I.e. the correct attitude towards the accumulation of wealth and God liberates one from anxiety. This is a liberation that Jesus as Saviour brings to His people.

The literary analyses showed the correct use of money could be used for acts of righteousness and thus an advancement of God's Kingdom, as opposed to the fear and anxiety that results from a worship of money. Something of the nature of living under God's rule was noted in chapter six, and is worth mentioning here as it further highlights the radical difference in orientation of lifestyle for the disciple who rejects worship of Money for worship of God.

For example, the motif of God's Kingdom and living under God's rule was shown to include a life involved with God's eternal purposes: it was shown to include participation with God in good works that transform other people's lives and in exercising compassion. That the motif of stewardship, and the application of stewardship of wealth can involve the disciple in such actions, dwarfs the anxiety-ridden degenerate type of character that the worship of money creates.

The application of money and God being radically different gods and the differing consequences could be as follows: Firstly, by the disciple taking time to consider who God is and the way He works (something which the literary analysis showed Jesus to instruct) and taking time to consider the outcome of the idol worship of money encourages a greater allegiance to Jesus. This is of course provided that one actually does desire a life characterised by generosity, blessing, truth, purity and revelation, as opposed to a life characterised by anxiety and stinginess. Coincidentally encouraging greater allegiance to Jesus was one of the stated purposes of this thesis as outlined in chapter one.

## 7.2.2 The Accumulation of Wealth

Luthi and Brunner (1963:129) say that Jesus, in Matthew 6:19 was advocating that a disciple cannot have amassed a significant amount of material wealth without giving the allegiance of one's heart to it. Notably they arrived at this conclusion by treating Jesus command not to lay up treasures on earth as an absolute command that could stand on its' own.

However the literary analysis concluded that by taking Jesus teaching style into account one can conclude that He was not prohibiting the accumulation of wealth. This speaks to the question of whether or not a disciple may commit her or himself to a vocation or enterprises whereby they accumulate a significant portion of wealth. It also speaks to the question of whether the disciple is to neglect work in favour of seeking God's Kingdom.

The literary analysis showed that the admonition from Jesus was not to neglect work, but in working hard to trust God to provide. This conclusion was reached in part by affirming that this scripture needs to be understood in light of Proverbs 6:6-8. This is a passage of wisdom literature, that encourages the reader to neglect laziness and be diligent in working to supply for one's needs. Also it was noted that the metaphors used by Jesus of birds, showed animals hard at work, but ultimately relying on God's goodness for provision. Further, the historical analysis showed Jesus to have had a trade, to have worked and yet he committed no sin.

Thus it is possible to be involved in enterprises whereby a disciple accumulates wealth and keep one's allegiance to God. However it was concluded in the examined theological motif of discipleship that Jesus may require different levels of sacrifice from different disciples. The historical analysis settled on the assumption that Matthew, a former tax collector, wrote the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew the tax collector was one who would have, if not accumulated lots of wealth would have been in the position to do so and gave up everything to follow Jesus. A point which the first readers of Matthew's gospel would have been aware of.

Further it was noted that discipleship requires the disciples to adopt the attitude of

preparedness to give up monetary pursuits in favour of obedience to Jesus. Jesus, whom the historical and theological analysis portrayed as the supreme example of how discipleship is to be lived, was known to have given up everything in obedience to God.

Matthew 6:19-34 provided some signals as to whether or not one's accumulation of Money is at the cost of authentic discipleship. Firstly one could argue from the saying of two kinds of treasure that if the disciple has not prioritised Heaven's values above money the disciple is not adhering to the demands of following Jesus.

Secondly, the saying of the good and bad eye showed that a stingy disposition means discipleship has been sacrificed for the worship of Money. Finally, a life characterised by anxiety and fear over provision points to a movement away from following Jesus, to skewed priorities and a wayward attitude toward wealth.

The cure for alleviation of worry or anxiety that is related to human survival and obscures disciple's priorities, was put forward as adequate trust in God. This kind of trust was not shown to be a quick fix. The literary analysis as noted in 7.2.1 but in more detail here, encourages disciples to *katamanthano* nature in order to learn. *Katamanthan* is a word which was shown to require some reflection and pondering.

Further this kind of reflection would have been done, as suggested by chapter two, in the context of a people that were suppressed by the Roman Empire and many of whom would have been exploited by their own countrymen. I.e. God's cure to the alleviation of this kind of worry may not meet the expectations of people who are looking for swift justice on their enemies.

One could also say that the alleviation of anxiety related to human survival and its cure, were counter the culture of the day. Chapter two showed the ruling Roman power to be extremely rich. This came about by conquest. Jesus on the other hand advocated trust in God. Further it was noted that philosophies of the day may have admired people who live a life free from the lure of wealth, but in practice did not adhere to such a world view.

That the teaching of Matthew 6:19-34 has been shown to not require the disciple to neglect the accumulation of wealth but to remain prepared to give up all to follow Jesus could carry the following applications for the Christian disciple: Firstly, as already mentioned the disciple needs to be prepared to counter-act the world view of his or her colleagues. As in Jesus day, so in this day, an attitude of a loose attachment to the accumulation of wealth may be respected but in a Western Society is not the standard *modus operandi*.

Secondly, the disciple should not feel hard-done-by should she come to a place where she has to give up everything to follow Jesus. The examination of the theological theme of God's Kingdom showed that ultimately God's Kingdom will be acknowledged by all, and Jesus the giver of the SOM will then be the judge of those who obeyed its commands. This is a comforting truth for those who have responded in faith and obedience to Jesus.

### **7.2.3 Stewardship of Money as Service to the Community**

Throughout this thesis discipleship and its demands have been inextricably linked to community. The historical analyses showed one of the purposes of Matthew as providing a definition for the Christian movement. The book was seen as addressed to a community of believers. Also, the literary analysis showed that generosity is fitting and required by the disciple. Generosity requires others. Further the motif of God's Kingdom carried the implication of God the King ruling over His people.

Within this context of community the disciples were encouraged to practice good stewardship with money. As already mentioned, allegiance to God is to be expressed through generosity to others. The church community was depicted as a relational community that was a spiritual family that cared deeply for the needs of the other. This spiritual family was shown to supersede the priority the disciple had to her or his own earthly family.

Thus it follows that money was expected to be used as a means to meet these needs of the spiritual family. However it should be noted that there is nothing in the literary context that suggested good stewardship resulting in generosity should only

be for the benefit of the believing community. It is in this sense open-ended, in that a disciple could practice generosity to both the believer and non believer. Later in time Paul wrote in Galatians that the church should do good to all people, but especially to fellow believers (Gal 6:10). I.e. Christian generosity goes to believer and non believer, even if priority might lie in goodness to a fellow brother or sister of God's household.

The church was shown in the theological analysis to be a community that was to make God known. God was portrayed as caring for the needs of His people. Thus generous stewardship of money entrusted to the believer by God is a reflection of God's character. Particularly as good stewardship of wealth was shown to create a disposition of purity, revelation, truth and blessing. These are attributes which reflect God and can be seen as follows;

- a) Purity – Jesus is known to be absent of any sort of moral defilement.
- b) Truth – Jesus claimed to be truth incarnate (John 14:6).
- c) Revelation – It is a common NT theme to note Jesus as revelation of who God is.

The Historical context suggests that the kind of generosity expected in the church community must happen regardless of the nature of community a disciple finds herself or himself in. For example, the historical analyses showed that the audience was a largely Jewish Christian Audience. The Jewish community contained several groups that prospered financially, but at times many in the Jewish community would be exploited by the rich land owners in the Jewish community.

The application for the believer here is obvious. It would be to practice generosity. Perhaps one could conclude that as the historical analysis showed the believing community of Matthew's church to definitely include people in want, the modern day "well off" believer could be sensitive to the needs of the less fortunate around them. She or he could also take stock of her or his life and ask the question as to whether it is characterised by generosity.

### **7.3 Assessing the Hypothesis**

The hypothesis as stated in chapter one essentially made two claims: Firstly it said that a biblical-theological analysis of Matthew 6:19-34 will show that money is presented as a god that daily challenges the Christian disciple's allegiance to Christ. It is fair to say that this first claim has been validated.

It is also fair to say that this claim stops short of what was found in Matthew 6:19-34. Not only was money presented as a rival god but the passage teaches on a couple of ways that allegiance to God is expressed over and above to money. I.e. through generosity to others and a life characterised by seeking God's kingdom.

The passage also expanded on ways for the disciple to move from the idolatry of money worship to allegiance to Jesus. I.e. by considering nature and what it teaches about who the Heavenly Father is, and the way He works and cares for His own. Further the passage showed disciples that are carrying such a misplaced allegiance are commanded to stop the worship of money and prioritise allegiance to God.

Secondly the hypothesis made the claim that Matthew 6:19-34 will teach that choosing to serve money leads to a degenerate experience for the disciple, while choosing to serve Christ will bring to the disciple a liberating experience in the present, and a rewarding experience in the future. Again, it is fair to say that this claim was validated.

The degenerate experience of worshipping money was seen as the disciple being stingy or in having a disposition where she or he is deceived into thinking she he is generous. What the hypothesis did not claim is that the demands of Matthew 6:19-34 are expected to be lived out in community, and so part of the degenerate experience in worshipping money is that the disciple could become a perpetrator of human dignity. I.e. by neglecting or suppressing others through one's desire to accumulate wealth.

The findings did show that choosing allegiance to God over money to be a liberating experience. Jesus was portrayed as a new Moses who leads his people from

captivity to sin. The SOM itself was shown to carry the implication that freedom from sin is possible. Thus the disciple in allegiance to God, is liberated from anxiety related to human survival.

Notably the hypothesis did not mention what the disciple would be liberated from. Further, not only is allegiance to Christ liberating in the present but rewarding. Rewards related to obedience to God were shown to be both a present and future reality, a point which the Hypothesis missed. Also, the Hypothesis missed any mention of the kind of attitude that would merit reward, i.e. one who obeys Christ without any thought of reward.

#### **7.4 Suggested Areas of Future Research**

Firstly, as the church was presented in this thesis as God's people in a covenant with Him, it would be helpful to explore the dimensions of what this covenant is, and the expectations it may or may not have on its members. One goal would be to assess how this covenant relationship would affect one's attitude and actions to other members of a covenant community.

In particular, and of course of interest to this author, an examination of how the dimensions of this covenant would affect the way a disciple stewards her or his wealth in the context of this community. It would be helpful to examine the pros and cons of how different church communities have attempted to organise themselves to, out of obedience to Matthew 6:19-34, meet the needs of each other. For example, there are at this moment, communities of believers around the world organising themselves into self-sustaining commune-type organisations attempting to live out Christian discipleship in such an environment.

Secondly, it was beyond the scope of this thesis to conduct a detailed exegesis of every passage that teaches on wealth in the scripture. While several other passages were touched on, it would be helpful to conduct an exegesis of a passage like James 5:1-6 in order to assess how this would add to the finding of Matthew 6:19-34. This passage in James is at times put forward by commentators as a passage built on an understanding of Matthew 6:19-34. One could research in order to compare findings

and assess how and if James enhances how one understands Matthew 6:19-34. A significant addition in James is the mention of an employer's role in the stewardship of wealth.

Finally, a synthesis of the findings of this thesis with other sciences would be of interest in order to have an empirical research validation of the findings. Specifically within the field of psychology: For example, the *Baker Encyclopaedia of Psychology and Counselling* lists anxiety as one of the most common emotional dispositions experienced by people (Benner & Hill 1999:88). Psychologists will note that anxiety can result in several negative results, such as loss of sleep, agitation, a sense of uncalm, loss of memory and concentration, and a loss of emotional comfort (Benner & Hill 1999:88). So there could be room to engage with where the other sciences agree with, and enhance, the understanding of Scripture's teachings found in Matthew 6:19-34.

## APPENDIX ONE

### TALBERTS FORMAL DIVISION OF THE TEXT

<b>Sub-Unit One</b>	
<b>Part One</b>	
Prohibition	6:20 - Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth
Command	6:20 - lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.
Reason	6:21 - For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
<b>Part Two</b>	
Assertion	6:22 - The lamp of the body is the eye
Inference	6:22b,23a - If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness
Conclusion	6:23b - If therefore the light that is in you <i>is</i> darkness, how great is that darkness.
<b>Part Three</b>	
Assertion	6:24a - No one can serve two masters
Reason	6:24b - either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to one and love the other.
Application	6:24c - You cannot serve God and mammon.
<b>Sub-Unit Two</b>	
<b>Part One</b>	
Prohibition	6:25a - Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will drink; nor about, what you will put on.

Four Reasons	<p>6:25b - Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?</p> <p>6:26 - Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?</p> <p>6:27 - Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?</p> <p>6:28 - ...Consider the lilies of the field...Now if God so clothes the grass of the field...</p>
<b>Part Two</b>	
Prohibition	6:31 - Therefore do not worry, saying "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?"
Two Reasons	<p>6:32a - For after all these things the Gentiles seek.</p> <p>6:32b - For your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.</p>
Command	6:33a - But seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness
Promise	6:33b - and all these things shall be added to you.
<b>Part Three</b>	
Prohibition	6:34 – Therefore do not worry about tomorrow...
Two Reasons	<p>6:34b - for tomorrow will worry about its own things.</p> <p>6:34c - Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.</p>

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