

NOVEMBER 8 2025 FATHER ERNESTO DE CICCIO

Some of you will remember the older translation that used to say, “You cannot serve both God and mammon.” Well, Jesus is making a very important point to us—that we can, at times, be overly attached to money. And it starts very young.

I’ll never forget. Years ago, my father had passed away and my little niece was very young. I asked her after Nonno died—“Nonno” is Italian for “grandfather”—“Do you remember Nonno?” She said, “Yes!” And then I asked, “What do you remember about him?” She said, “He always gave me money.” At that early age, already she valued the almighty dollar.

Did she remember all the hugs that Nonno gave her? All the nice stories he would tell her? Hopefully, she did. But how sad that, even early on, we start prizing those things that we put in the bank or in our wallets. Yes, we need money to live—we have to pay our expenses—and we all learn at some point to live within our means. But do we understand that there are things in life more important than our personal wealth?

The Pharisees were part of the crowd that Jesus was speaking to, and the gospel refers to them as “the Pharisees who were lovers of money.” What a line, eh? “Lovers of money.” We are called to love people, not things. And yet, we love money. We love how much we can accumulate. We love how much we can spend. We love how much we can leave behind in our will. We love how much we can inherit.

And Jesus makes it very clear: “You cannot serve two masters, God and wealth.” God is more important to us as people of faith. And relationships are more important to us also, as people of faith. Because

we journey through life with the love and support of our brothers and sisters.

Does it take a tornado to hit for us to realize what's more important? You see these terrible tragedies—natural disasters happening in different countries—and people come out with their lives and say, “I’m alive. I may have lost my house, my possessions, but I’m here, and my family’s here.” There are things in our life that are more important, so let’s spend our energy focusing on those things.

Money will pass away eventually. So will our physical strength and personal beauty. What will not pass away is our faith in God, which gives us the courage and strength to live each day. What will not pass away is the love that we practise in our human relationships. What will not pass away are those good works that we can bank even more securely than our money.

So let’s focus on things that come from above, not just things that come from below. The Pharisees were people who loved money—lovers of money. I hope nobody we know ever refers to us like that. “Well, that one’s a lover of money.” I hope people will instead say, “That one really loves people. That one really loves God.”

And that’s important because at the end of the gospel, Jesus says, “God knows your hearts.” God knows what we really have in here. So once in a while, let’s examine ourselves and say, “What have I put in here? Is it love of wealth, or other possessions, or things that pass away? Or have I really nurtured true love in my heart—love of God, love of neighbour?”

Jesus teaches us to have our hearts in the right place. May our hearts never stray from the teachings of Christ. May we love God much more than we love all these other things that we’re sometimes overly attached

to, but that will not lead us to Heaven. Our God and our good hearts will lead us there.