

Sunday, October 11, 2020 am

**TEACHINGS OF JESUS (21)**  
**Sermon On the Mount (20)**  
**Where Is Your Treasure?**  
**Matthew 6:19-21**

As we continue our study of the Sermon on the Jesus, we have devoted that past few months to Jesus addressing how our righteousness is to exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20) and we have devoted considerable times into ways they had corrupted the teachings of God and acted with self-righteousness (giving, prayer and fasting). We now find another area where there was corruption among these religious hypocrites (they were lovers of money – Luke 16:14, cf. Matthew 23:14), BUT Jesus turns His message toward general living.

Our text for today, is a familiar text we quote from time to time. In this lesson we will put it in its context and make application.

I. ***Do not lay up for yourselves treasure on earth –***

- a. An interesting observation about the words used here. Both “Lay up” and “treasure” are from the same root word (θησαυρος, thēsauros) and might be a play on words. But they are different in that the first word is a verb and the second a noun. In English, it might sound like this, “Don’t treasure earthly treasures.”
- b. What is “treasure on earth”?
  - i. Another way to describe it is as stuff.  
This describes one whose pursuits are worldly. He is looking for meaning and satisfaction in material things.  
Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes searched for the meaning of life. He searched everywhere – wealth, power, pride, control of others, fame, travels, recreation, wine, even worldly knowledge. He concluded that all such was vanity or emptiness, like a vapor of air.
  - ii. The Bible gives continued warnings about covetousness, greed, envy, etc. –  
2 Timothy 3:2 where Paul described the selfish pursuits of men – they loved themselves and money, et.  
1 Timothy 6:9 – Paul warned about the desire to be rich.  
Colossians 3:5 calls for us to put to death covetousness which is idolatry.  
These are the worldly pleasures – the “passing pleasures of sin” (Hebrews 11:25).  
1 John 2:15-17 – Do not love the world, or the things that are in the world.
- c. Why should we not lay-up treasures on earth?
  - i. Because things can happen to it – rust, moth, theft, etc. There is nothing in this life that is permanent. Diseases can rob us, economic turns, criminal activities can all change what you possess and how you enjoy it.  
1 Timothy 6:17 notes that the riches of this life are uncertain.  
Proverbs 23:4-5, *Do not overwork to be rich; Because of your own understanding, cease! Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.*  
Even our life is a vapor – James 4:14 – it appears for a little while and then vanishes.
  - ii. Furthermore, you cannot take it with you – EVEN if your “toys” outlast you, they will do you no good when this life is over.  
1 Timothy 6:7 notes that we brought nothing into this world and will carry nothing out.  
That was Solomon’s plight in his quest for the meaning of life in Ecclesiastes, cf. Ecclesiastes

2:14-16, 5:15-16, etc.

And truth be told, you are not even guaranteed tomorrow.

iii. Because the pursuit of things affects your attitude about life and God -

Luke 12:15 – *beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.* Jesus follows this up with the parable of the rich fool who left God out of the picture.

Far too often, worldly pursuits cause us to forget God. This is why the proverbs writer said, "Give me just enough" (Proverbs 30:8-9)

Matthew 19:16ff – the rich, young ruler illustrates this. He had great possessions which got in his way of serving God. NOTE especially vs. 23-24, *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."* Jesus did note it is NOT impossible, but you need God's help.

Also, heed the warning of 1 Timothy 6:9-10 – the love of money – the root of all (kinds of) evil, leads to temptations and a snare (a trap), as well as foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in perdition... It leads to many sorrows, etc.

In vs. 24 Jesus will say, "You cannot serve God and mammon" (material abundance)

d. Some observations about this:

i. Jesus is NOT saying that it is wrong to have any possessions.

That is even reflected in 1 Timothy 6:17-18 – command those who are rich...

Jesus did not say you have to live in abject poverty, but rather you do not TRUST in uncertain riches. And if they hinder your service to Him, what are you willing to sacrifice?

ii. Money is morally neutral. It is about attitudes and how it is used. Jeremiah 9:23-24 clarifies what we are talking about.

iii. We need to constantly remind ourselves of how abundantly blessed we are. (Caveat – I am not ignoring the plight of poverty in our country as I say this). Our poor have access to so much more than most of the world. People in third world countries see our poor as wealthy. Some who would say if you have an extra pair of sandals and clothes you are well off. And we can see where our prosperity and wealth is getting us as a nation – we are selfish, want more, NOT content, constantly asking for handouts, etc. Are we letting the pursuit of luxuries (and PROPERLY define what a necessity actually is) crowd out God or limiting our ability to serve Him?

**II. Lay up for yourself treasure in heaven.**

a. What exactly is "treasure in heaven"?

This would be **things of more valuable than worldly pursuits or wealth.** When we understand that heaven is a spiritual realm (John 18:36, Romans 14:17), we realize that it is not about material things. So what are some examples of "treasure in heaven"?

One source listed 4 things

i. **We will be in the presence of God** – 1 Thessalonians 4:17, Revelation 22:3-4, *And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.*

ii. **We will finally have our rest** – Revelation 14:13. Hebrews 4:9-10 – this world is full of toil and tiresome tasks that are never done. And again, MOST of us are blessed with the ability to rest (only working a handful of hours each day and with days off each week). Considering the culture of the first century, many would work a full day just to get enough to eat and maybe feed their family.

In some parts of the world

- iii. **We will have our dwelling place with no more tears, troubles, temptations, or trials** – Revelation 21:4. Think about that.
  - iv. **We will experience eternal life** – Romans 6:23. The very thing so many desire, even this life – to prolong life, but after awhile it gets tiring. But not in heaven. We will experience eternal bliss.
  - v. I would ADD to this, **the souls we have won to Christ that also remain faithful**. In heaven we will not be alone, we will be with the godly. If we had some small part in winning them think of what a treasure that would be.
- b. Why should I lay up for myself treasures in heaven?
- i. It is secure there, and no one can take it from you - 1 Peter 1:3-4
  - ii. John 10:28 – I believe that is the point Jesus is making. No one can snatch us from there when we arrive. Truly, “What a day that will be...”
- c. **Where your treasure is, there your heart will also be.**  
 The point Jesus is making. IF you are living in the pursuit of worldly things, that is where your heart will be. When faced with the real choice between serving God or something material, we will choose wrongly.  
 Proverb 4:23 – keep your heart with all diligence, out of IT spring the issues of life.  
 See also Romans 6:16-18 – we need to consider this with our stuff – to what are you in bondage?
- d. **HOW do I lay up for myself treasure in heaven?**
- i. **Good works to others** – giving, willing to share, etc. Cup of cold water – Matthew 10:42, also Matthew 25:31-46. In our context, this is likely the main point. Jesus wants us to think about others more than ourselves (Philippians 2:3-4)
  - ii. **Winning souls to Christ** – a soul won to Him is certainly heavenly treasure. Consider the “lost” parables – the sheep and coin and son (Luke 15) – there is REJOICING in heaven over one sinner who repents.
  - iii. **Supporting the Lord’s work** – Paul noted how the Philippians had fellowship with Him in his work. Philippians 4:17 he described it as “fruit that abounds to your account.”
  - iv. **Proper attitudes toward this world and its things** – you must be “other worldly”; Colossians 3:2 – you set your mind on things above.  
 Consider Job 1:21 where he lost everything, but notice his attitude. Naked I came into this world,... “Blessed be the name of the LORD”  
 Matthew 16:26, What profit is it to a man...
  - v. **Learn contentment** – Philippians 4:11-12, 1 Timothy 6:8-10, Hebrews 13:5. Contentment gives you a proper perspective with whatever you have. It is key to where your treasure will be.

Certainly, we could add many other thoughts to this. Jesus is reminding us that if we are to be righteous in God’s eyes, we need to be focused on that with our attitudes, actions AND possessions. I once heard of a man that wanted to be baptized. As he entered the water he realized that his wallet was in his pocket. He said something to the preacher who told him, “That’s ok. That needs to be baptized too.” It makes the point – are we REALLY putting God first in our lives. More on this as we continue this sermon. So where is your treasure? Think about it!

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**III. The Lamp of the body is the eye**

- a. One of many illustrations dealing with the eye as being the filter to the soul.
- b. How is the eye the lamp of the body?
- c. How can our eyes be good? (generous, healthy or whole), KJV uses the word “single”, as in “single purpose” meaning focused COMPLETELY on God.
- d. How can our eyes be bad? When something goes wrong (cataracts, etc.)
- e. How does this relate to our treasures?

Matthew 16:26, What profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul.