

## **WHAT'S IN YOUR HEART?**

Based on the command of Christ #13 – “Lay up treasures in Heaven”.

Mt. 15:8 - These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

Lk. 8:15 - But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop. Human beings are naturally thing-oriented.

Col. 3:1 - Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

We are strongly inclined to be wrapped up in seeking, acquiring, enjoying, and protecting material possessions.

In prosperous cultures such as those in which most Westerners live, the propensity to build our lives around things is especially great.

Economic problems such as inflation, recessions, and depressions involve many complex factors-monetary, political, military, social, climatic, and so on.

But with the exception of the climatic, over which men have little control, the root cause behind most economic difficulty is greed.

The problems are brought about in the first place because of greed, and they are often seemingly impossible to solve for the same reason.

When you consider your wealth of time, talents and treasures, do you see yourself in giving a portion to God or laying all at God's feet and saying use me for your service.

This means asking God: How do you want me to use the time, talents, and treasures that you have given me for your Glory?

It makes all the difference in both your daily worship as well as how you will be used by God for His Glory and the advancement of His Kingdom.

In Matthew 6:19-24, Jesus looks at material things through three perspectives...

We are to set our hearts on...

## **I. ONE TREASURE**

Matthew 6:19-21(ESV)

[19]"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,

[20]but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

[21]For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Lay up = (thesaurizô) and treasures = (thesauros) come from the same basic Greek term, which is also the source of our English thesaurus, a treasury of words.

A literal translation of this phrase would therefore be, "do not treasure up treasures for yourselves."

Jesus gives an injunction and follows with a reason and explanation for His exhortation.

The Greek also carries the connotation of stacking or laying out horizontally, as one stacks coins.

In the context of this passage the idea is that of stockpiling or hoarding, and therefore pictures wealth that is not being used.

The money or other wealth is simply stored for safekeeping; it is kept for the keeping's sake to make a show of wealth or to create an environment of lazy overindulgence

Jesus instructed on the folly of this elsewhere:

Luke 12:15-21(ESV)

[15]And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

[16]And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully,

[17]and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?'

[18]And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

[19]And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'

[20]But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'

[21]So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." (ESV)

It is clear from this passage, as well as from many others in Scripture, that Jesus is not advocating material poverty as a means to spirituality.

In all of His many different instructions, He only once told a person:

Matthew 19:21(ESV) -Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

In that particular case, the young man's wealth was his idol, and therefore a special barrier between him and the lordship of Jesus Christ.

It provided an excellent opportunity to test whether or not that man was fully committed to turning over the control of his life to Christ.

His response proved that he was not.

The problem was not in the wealth itself, but the man's unwillingness to part with it.

The Lord did not specifically require His disciples to give up all their money and other possessions to follow Him, although it may be that some of them voluntarily did so.

He did require obedience to His commands no matter what that cost.

Giving to the poor is not enough.

It is not the ultimate aim.

You are laying up treasures on earth if your ultimate aim is to put clothing on backs or food in bellies.

It is extremely short sighted to solve a temporary problem while missing the eternal one.

We actually store up treasures in heaven when we help the poor, and seek their ultimate welfare, that they hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and come to faith in Him.

That is an eternal benefit.

Nowhere did Jesus magnify poverty or criticize the legitimate getting of wealth.

God made all things, including food, clothing, and precious metals.

God has declared that all things He has made are good (Gen. 1:31).

God knows that we need certain things in order to live (Matt. 6:32).

In fact, He has given us "richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim. 6:17).

We are to work diligently (Proverbs 6:6-8) and provide for our families (1 Timothy 5:8).

It is not wrong to possess things, but it is wrong for things to possess us!

John Piper - "The reason money is so crucial for Jesus is that across all cultures and all ages it represents the alternative to God as the treasure of our hearts, and therefore the object of our worship. It becomes the great threat to our obedience to the first and last of The Commandments"

Exodus 20:3(ESV) - You shall have no other gods before (besides) me.

Exodus 20:17(ESV) - "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

We can have things as our idol by either preoccupation in its acquiring or continual worry about a perceived lack of it.

Whenever we value something over God, that is idolatry. It can be the respect of others, wealth, our family or even things we might not realize because they are in religious garb:

It can even be a style of worship, a role in a local church, or even a church program, event, or building, whatever we cherish above God.

It can be tangible or intangible.

Don't think that because you don't perceive yourselves as rich that this does not apply to you.

Compared with the majority on this planet, we are very rich in worldly resources.

We can become deceived when the objectives are not intrinsically bad in themselves, but we become consumed with their attainment or enjoy them greater than we delight in God.

We discover our real treasures are, simply by studying our deepest desires.

The key to Jesus' warning here is yourselves.

When we accumulate possessions without even giving thought to what God's desires are for them, those possessions become idols.

It is possible that both our treasures upon earth and our treasures in heaven can involve money and other material things.

Possessions that are wisely, lovingly, willingly, and generously used for kingdom purposes can be a means of accumulating heavenly possessions.

When they are simply intended for selfishness, they not only become a spiritual hindrance but are subject to loss through moth, rust, and thieves.

In ancient times, wealth was frequently measured in part by clothing.

Compared to our day of mass-produced clothes, garments represented a considerable investment.

Rich people sometimes had golden threads woven into their clothing, both to display and to store their wealth.

But the best clothes were made of wool, which the moth loves to eat; and even the richest persons had difficulty protecting their clothes from the insects.

Isaiah 51:8 (ESV)- For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool; but my righteousness will be forever, and my salvation to all generations."

Wealth was also often held in grain, and.

Brôsis (rust) literally means "an eating," as in and is reference to grain that is eaten by rats, mice, worms, and insects.

One author put these two elements of "Moth & Rust" together and said that they: "represent all those (natural) agencies and process that cause earthly treasures to diminish in value and finally to cease completely to serve their purposes. Thus, bread becomes moldy (Josh. 9:5) garments wear out (Ps. 102:26) fields (particularly neglected ones) become weed-infested (Prov. 24:30), walls and fences break down (Prov. 24:31) roofs cave in so that houses begin to leak (Eccl. 10:18); and gold and silver become tarnished and perish (1 Peter 1:7; 18). Add the havoc brought about by termites, hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, earthquakes, plant diseases, soul erosion, etc. The list is almost endless".

D.A. Carson - "It is a poor bargain which exchanges the eternal for the temporal, regardless of how much tinsel is used to make the temporal more attractive."

John 6:27 (ESV)- Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."

Almost any kind of wealth, of course, is subject to thieves, which is why many people buried their nonperishable valuables in the ground away from the house, often in a field (see Matt. 13:44).

Break in is literally "dig through;" and could refer to digging through the mud walls of a house or digging up the dirt in a field.

William Hendriksen – "Like the list of natural agencies and process that cause earthly treasures to diminish in value and finally to cease completely to serve their purposes, is the list of human factors that the concept of "thieves" represent: "Inflation, oppressive taxation which may amount to confiscation, bank failures, stock market slumps and crashes, expensed in connection with prolonged illnesses, these and many similar woes have the same effect. Besides, man's body, including that of the strongest, gradually wears away. When (someone) dies, all the earthly treasures on which (we might) have pinned (our) hopes vanish with (us)".

But when our time, energy, and possessions are used to serve others and to further the Lord's work, they build up heavenly resources that are completely free from destruction or theft.

There neither moth nor rust destroys, and ... thieves do not break in or steal.

Heavenly security is the only absolute security.

1 Timothy 6:6-19 (ESV)

[6]Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment,  
[7]for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world.

[8]But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

[9]But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

[10]For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

[11]But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.

[12]Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

[13]I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession,

[14]to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

[15]which he will display at the proper time--he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

[16]who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

[17]As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

[18]They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,

[19]thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

The treasures in heaven are not explicitly spelled out in our text of Mt. 6 for the reason that the author is trying to press the point of what we treasure in general.

Therefore, passages like this one in 1 Timothy, and many elsewhere spell out elements of the treasures in heaven.

Every Godly pleasure we enjoy now is only a down payment and foretaste of the ultimate heavenly treasure that we are to look forward to when the Kingdom of God is consummated when Christ returns.

How does what we celebrated last week impact our perspective of treasures in Heaven?

1 Peter 1:3-4(ESV)

[3]Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,



[4]to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,

Jesus goes on to point out that a person's possessions and his deepest motives and desires are inseparable, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

They will either both be earthly or both be heavenly.

It is impossible to have one on earth and the other in heaven (James 4:4).

As always, the heart must be right first.

In fact, if the heart is right, everything else in life falls into its proper place.

The person who is right with the Lord will be generous and happy in his giving to the Lord's work. By the same token, a person who is covetous, self-indulgent, and stingy has good reason to question his relationship with the Lord.

John Piper - "When the heart is set on something, it values it, cherishes it, treasures it. That is what worship means".

This is the reason why Christianity is not moralism.

We do not preach a list a do's and don'ts.

Implying that somehow by doing we become right with God.

The whole issue is that of the heart.

Jesus is not saying that if we put our treasure in the right place our heart will then be in the right place, but that the location of our treasure indicates where our heart already is.

Spiritual problems are always heart problems.

Sinful acts come from a sinful heart, just as righteous acts come from a righteous heart.

Illustration: There is a story of the great missionary David Livingstone. The body of David Livingstone was buried in England where he was born, but his heart was buried in the Africa he loved. At the foot of a tall tree in a small African village the natives dug a hole and placed in it the heart of this man who they loved and respected.

If your heart were to be buried in the place you loved most during life, where would it be?

In your pocketbook?

In an appropriate space down at the office?

Where is your heart?

We are to set our hearts on...ONE TREASURE and:

## **II. ONE VISION**

Matthew 6:22-23(ESV)

[22]"The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light,

[23]but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

These verses expand on the previous three, and the eye becomes an illustration of the heart.

It has been described that the Eye is the lamp, or lens, of the body, through which all light comes to us.

It is the only channel of light we possess, and therefore our only means of vision.

Likewise, the heart is the eye of the soul, through which the illumination of every spiritual experience shines.

In scriptural language, it is through our hearts that God's truth, love, peace, and every other spiritual blessing comes to us.

When our hearts, our spiritual eyes, are healthy, then our whole body will be full of light.

Haploous (healthy/clear) can also mean single, or focused as it is translated in the King James Version.

An eye that is healthy/clear represents a heart that has single-minded devotion.

The implication in the present verse is that if our heart, represented by the eye, is generous (healthy/clear), our whole spiritual life will be flooded with spiritual understanding, or light.

Scripture specifies where we should then cast our gaze:

2 Corinthians 4:18 (ESV) - as we) look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

One commentator said of this situation: Just as a person has a natural eye ... to illumine his physical existence and to bring him into contact with his earthly environment, so he has a spiritual eye namely, the mind, to brighten his inner life, to guide him morally and spiritual, and to keep him in contact with the heavenly Father.

Colossians 3:1-2(ESV)

[1]If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

[2]Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

There is a stern warning for those who do not set their minds on things that are above:

Philippians 3:18-19 (ESV)

[18]For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

[19]Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

If our eye is bad, however, if it is diseased or damaged, no light can enter, and the whole body will be full of darkness.

If our hearts are encumbered with material concerns they become “blind” and insensitive to spiritual concerns.

The eye is like a window which, when clear, allows light to shine through, but, when dirty, or bad, prevents light from entering.

As the healthy/clear relates to being single, or focused in mind  
The bad or diseased eye, relates to being diffused or double minded:

James 1:8 (ESV)- he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Pongros (bad) usually means evil, as it is translated here in the King James Version.

In the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) it is often used in translating the Hebrew expression “evil eye,” a Jewish colloquialism that means grudging, or stingy.

Deuteronomy 15:9(ESV) - Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, ‘The seventh year, the year of release is near,’ and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin.

The eye that is bad is the heart that is selfishly indulgent.

The person who is materialistic and greedy is spiritually blind.

Because he has no way of recognizing true light, he thinks he has light when he does not.

What is thought to be light is therefore really darkness, and because of the self-deception, how great is the darkness!

The principle is simple and sobering: the way we look at and use our money is a sure barometer of our spiritual condition.

Illus: There's a story of how money can blur vision: A certain tribe in Africa elects a new king every seven years, but it invariably kills its old king. For seven years the member of the tribe enjoying this high honor is provided with every luxury known to savage life. During these years his authority is absolute, even to the power of life and death. For seven years he rules, is honored and surfeited with possessions, but at the end he dies. Every member of the tribe is aware of this, because it is a custom of long standing; but there is never lacking an applicant for the post. For seven years of luxury and power men are willing to sacrifice the remainder of life's expectation. Scores and hundreds and thousands are willing to be bankrupt through eternity if they may only win their millions here.

We are to set our hearts on...

ONE TREASURE

ONE VISION and:

### **III. ONE MASTER**

Matthew 6:24 (ESV) - "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

The third choice relates to allegiance, to masters.

Just as we cannot have our treasures both in earth and in heaven or our bodies both in light and in darkness, we cannot serve two masters.

Kurios (masters) is often translated lord, and refers to a slave owner.

The idea is not simply that of an employer, of which a person may have several at the same time and work for each of them satisfactorily.

Many people today hold two or more jobs.

If they work the number of hours they are supposed to and perform their work as expected, they have fulfilled their obligation to their employers, no matter how many they may have.

The idea is of masters of slaves.

But by definition, a slave owner has total control of the slave.

For a slave there is no such thing as partial or part-time obligation to his master.

He owes fulltime time service to a full-time master.

He is owned and totally controlled by and obligated to his master.

He has nothing left for anyone else.

To give anything to anyone else would make his master less than master.

It is not simply difficult, but absolutely impossible, to serve two masters and fully or faithfully be the obedient slave of each.

Over and over the New Testament speaks of Christ as Lord and Master and of Christians as His bondslaves.

Paul tells us:

Romans 6:16-22(ESV)

[16]Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

[17]But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,

[18]and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

[19]I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

[20]For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

[21]But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

[22]But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

This passage as well as many others like Jer. 31, talk very clearly that, once redeemed, we have a new heart, free from the bondage of sin.

Although we can sin... we must root out those habits and distractions that lead us to sin,

We have a new spirit and Master and are called slaves of righteousness.

That's why if someone lives a habitual pattern of unrepentant sin...

God indicates that person is not redeemed and still in bondage to sin, and the end of those things is eternal death.

People who are not Christians believe they live a free life:

John 8:34 (ESV) - Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.

The "commits" grammatically here is in the sense of habitual and continual. Who lives a life of sin, is enslaved to sin.

Sin is his or her master.

We cannot claim Christ as Lord if our allegiance is to anything or anyone else, including ourselves.

And when we know God's will but resist obeying it, we give evidence that our loyalty is other than to Him.

We can no more serve two masters at the same time than we can walk in two directions at the same time.

We will either ... hate the one and love the other, or ... devoted/hold to one and despise the other.

John Calvin - "Where riches hold the dominion of the heart, God has lost His authority"

Our treasure is either on earth or in heaven,

Our spiritual life is either full of light or of darkness,

And our master is either God or mammon (possessions, earthly goods).

Wealth here is personified; it is presented as a master to whom a person is the slave of his holdings.

If however, if God controls us, and we place everything from money, time and talents at God's disposal...

That is loving God with all our hearts, soul, mind and strength (Mt. 22:37).

Loving God is not just a personal internal feeling, but something that is shown in service and even sacrifice (Mt. 10:37-39).

That is why Christ could then say:

Matthew 6:33 (ESV) - But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

As once commentator put it: "The orders of those two masters are diametrically opposed and cannot coexist. The one commands us to walk by faith and the other demands we walk by sight. The one calls us to be humble and the other to be proud, the one to set our minds on things above and the other to set them on things below. One calls us to love light, the other to love darkness. The one tells us to look toward things unseen and eternal and the other to look at things seen and temporal.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones - "When money becomes difficult, the first thing we economize on is our contribution to God's work

D.A. Carson - "We tend to move toward the object on which we fix our gaze. In the same way, our whole lives drift relentlessly toward the spot where our treasures are stored, because our hearts will take us there. To follow Jesus faithfully entails therefore a consistent development of our deepest loves, to train ourselves to adopt an unswerving loyalty to kingdom values and to delight in all God approves."



So we should have...

One treasure

One Vision

And One Master

What's In YOUR Heart?