

Laying Up Treasure In Heaven

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INTRODUCTION

1. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon described the problem with earthly treasures...

Slide - Ecclesiastes 5:10–16 “He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; Nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity. When goods increase, They increase who eat them; So what profit have the owners Except to see them with their eyes?”

Slide - 12 The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, Whether he eats little or much; But the abundance of the rich will **not** permit him to sleep. There is a severe evil which I have seen under the sun: Riches kept for their owner to his hurt.

Slide - 14 But those riches perish through misfortune; When he begets a son, there is nothing in his hand. As he came from his mother’s womb, naked shall he return, To go as he came;

Slide - And he shall take nothing from his labor Which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a severe evil— Just exactly as he came, so shall he go. And what profit has he who has labored for the wind?”

- a. Money and abundance do not truly satisfy
- b. The abundance of the rich prevent good sleep, and often hurts the owner
- c. Riches perish through misfortune, and cannot be taken with us when we die

Slide - 2. Matthew 6:19–21 19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal, For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Here Jesus commands us to lay up treasure not on earth, but in heaven...

- a. Likely a Hebrew idiom, in which a contrast is made for the sake of emphasis - cf. Jn 6:27
- b. Not that it is wrong to have earthly treasures per se, but our focus should be on laying up treasure in heaven

Why should our focus be on laying up treasure in heaven?

Also, how do we lay up treasure in heaven? In Matthew 6:19-21, Jesus tells us...

Slide - I. REASONS TO LAY UP TREASURE IN HEAVEN

A. TREASURE ON EARTH IS INSECURE...

1. Moth and rust destroy (material things are perishable)
2. Thieves break in and steal (material things are subject to theft)
3. There is also loss due to inflation, stock devaluation, bankruptcies, faulty investments, etc.

Slide - B. TREASURE IN HEAVEN IS SECURE...

1. Neither moth nor rust destroys (our treasures are imperishable)

Slide - 1 Peter 1:4 “to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you”

2. Thieves cannot break in and steal (our treasures are securely guarded) –

Slide - 1 Peter 3:4 “rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”

Slide - C. OUR TREASURE IS WHERE OUR HEART WILL BE...

1. That is, where our affections, our hopes, our dreams will be

2. If our treasure is on earth, our hearts will experience much disappointment

a. As things for which you have affection decay or are one day destroyed by fire

b. As things in which you find your primary joy are suddenly gone through things like theft

3. If our treasure is in heaven, our hearts will not suffer great disappointments

a. For our treasure is "incorruptible, undefiled, and does not fade away"

b. Nothing can take our treasure away from us, for it is:

1) "reserved in heaven for you"

2) "kept by the power of God through faith"

4. Whatever happens on earth will not devastate us! - e.g.,

Slide - Hebrews 10:32-34 “But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.”

5. When these words are taken to heart and applied

a. The storms of life will not overwhelm us

b. Because we've built our foundation upon the words of Jesus!

Slide - Matthew 7:24–27 “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall for it was founded on the rock.

Slide - 26 “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

Slide - D. TO KEEP OUR EYE GOOD...

Slide - Matthew 6:22 “The lamp of the body is the eye. 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. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

1. Understanding the metaphor used by Jesus:

- a. The "body" likely represents the soul or inner man
- b. The "eye" likely represents the gaze of the soul or the heart of man
- c. The word "good" in Greek means "simple, single, uncomplicated"
- d. The word "bad" in Greek means "wicked, evil"
- e. In the Scriptures, the expression "evil eye" is used to mean "envious, covetous" - cf. Pr 23:6; Mt 20:15; Mk 7:22

Slide - Matthew 20:15 "Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?"

2. Explaining the metaphor used by Jesus:

- a. If the heart or gaze of the soul be "good" ("single" in its love for the things of God), then one is filled with "light" (goodness, righteousness, and truth) - cf. Ep 5:8-10
- b. If the heart or gaze of the soul be "evil" (full of envy, covetousness), then one's soul is filled with "darkness" (selfishness, wickedness, and falsehood)!

3. Thus the need for Jesus' warning:

- a. To guard what goes in your eye
 - 1) I.e., what you allow your eyes to dwell upon
 - 2) Remember, there is such a thing as "the lusts of the eyes" (i.e., materialism)
- b. To be rich toward God, free from covetousness - Lk 12:13-21
 - 1) Note Jesus' warning - Lk 12:15

Slide - Luke 12:15 "And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

- 2) Note His conclusion - Lk 12:21

Slide - Luke 12:21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

4. Paul likewise warns of the danger of materialism, or covetousness

- a. Those who desire to be rich fall - 1Ti 6:9

Slide - 1 Timothy 6:9 "But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition."

- 1) Into snares and temptations
- 2) Into many foolish and harmful lusts
- 3) To drown in destruction and perdition

- b. The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil – as we see in the next verse

Slide - 1 Timothy 6:10 "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."

- 1) From which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness
- 2) From which some have pierced themselves with many sorrows

Slide - E. TO MAKE GOD OUR MASTER...

1. No one can serve two masters –

Slide - Matthew 6:24 “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

- a. A master by definition demands "total loyalty", and we are unable to please two masters at the same time
 - b. Such is certainly true with God - cf. Exo 34:14
 - c. Mammon (Aramaic for riches) is evidently no different
2. We have to choose between God and mammon
 - a. When wealth is coveted, and becomes the priority in our lives, it becomes a god - cf. Ep 5:5; Col 3:5
 - b. So the choice becomes one as to whether we shall worship the One True God, or be "idolaters" following after a false god!
 3. Choose to serve God!
 - a. As Jesus would later say, "Seek first the kingdom of God"

Slide - Matthew 6:33 “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

- b. Do this, and God becomes our Master
- c. Since we can't serve two masters, this effectively eliminates Mammon from being our "god"!

For such reasons, Jesus tells us why to lay up in treasure in heaven.

Jesus also tells us how to lay up treasure in heaven

Slide - II. HOW TO LAY UP TREASURE IN HEAVEN

A. BY GIVING TO THE POOR...

1. Jesus connected giving to the poor with laying up treasure on two occasions

Slide - a. To His disciples - Luke 12:33 “Sell what you have and give alms”

Slide - b. To a rich ruler - Luke 18:22 “So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

2. Paul also connected sharing one's wealth with laying up treasure in heaven –

Slide - 1 Timothy 6:17-19 “Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works,

ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

- a. To be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share
- b. Storing up a good foundation for the time to come
- c. To lay hold on eternal life

Slide - B. NOT THAT ETERNAL LIFE CAN BE PURCHASED...

1. Salvation is by grace through faith, not of works - Ep 2:8-9;

Tit 3:5

a. We are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ - 1Pe 1:

18-19

b. And as children of God we are joint-heirs with Christ, recipients of every spiritual blessing in Christ –

Slide - Romans 8:16-17 “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ”

2. But giving to the poor helps us to lay hold on eternal life

a. By freeing our hearts from covetousness (idolatry) - cf. Ep

5:5

b. By reminding us when our true reward will be received - cf.

Lk 14:12-14

CONCLUSION

1. We are not called to severe self-discipline and avoidance of all forms of indulgence

a. God wants us to enjoy what we have - 1Ti 6:17c; cf. Ec 5:18-20

Slide - Ecclesiastes 5:18–19 “Here is what I have seen: It is good and fitting for one to eat and drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor in which he toils under the sun all the days of his life which God gives him; for it is his heritage. As for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, and given him power to eat of it, to receive his heritage and rejoice in his labor—this is the gift of God.”

b. Yet proper enjoyment requires a heart for giving - cf. Ac 20:35

Slide - Acts 20:35 “I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

2. Thus we are to work with our hands...

a. Not just to provide for ourselves and our families - 1 Tim 5:8

b. But also for others in need - Ep 4:28

Slide - Ephesians 4:28 "Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need."

3. Are we laying up treasure in heaven...?

a. Jesus told us why

b. Jesus (and Paul) also told us how

Have you given much thought as to how you can be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share?

Store up a good foundation for the time to come, and lay hold on eternal life...!

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