

LAYING UP TREASURES

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TEXT: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mat. 6:19-24).

THESIS: To show the importance of placing proper value and priority on that which is of eternal importance.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Jesus, in this section of the "Sermon on the Mount," presented the choice each man must make and will make, whether to serve God or mammon.
 - a. None can serve both at the same time, but each will serve one or the other (v. 24).
 - b. That which one treasures will determine his choice between the heavenly and the earthly—to be a slave of God or a slave of mammon (riches).
 - c. Man chooses what he treasures, and his treasure will have the foremost place in his heart, soul, and mind.
2. What are treasures?
 - a. Literally, Matthew 6:19-20 would read: "Do not treasure for you treasures on the earth, where moth and rust removes, and where thieves dig through and steal; but treasure for you treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust removes, and where thieves do not dig through nor steal."
 - b. That which one treasures is that which he loves, which he holds in highest regard, and puts in first place in his life because of the value he places on it, whether in accordance with God-placed values or in spite of them.
 - 1) Many think of only material wealth as the point of this passage.
 - 2) Truly, such treasure could be possessions of money, wealth, and financial gain of whatever sort.
 - 3) However, included in this context are the other earthly things one might treasure such as popularity, power, position, and pleasure.
 - c. We must note that Jesus does not, in this sermon, prohibit one's wise preparation and saving in order to care properly for his family which care God's Word plainly and strongly enjoins elsewhere, nor is material wealth inherently sinful.
3. In our study, we shall consider these main points as given by our Lord.
 - a. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth (Mat. 6:19).
 - b. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (Mat. 6:20).
 - c. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Mat. 6:21).

DISCUSSION:

I. LAY NOT UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES UPON EARTH (Mat. 6:19).

A. Why Lay Up Treasures That Are Earthly?

1. These treasures hold the danger of making one poorer for having them because they can take God's place, and crowd out what is really valuable.
2. They are earth-bound and earth-binding for their earthly possession is the love of the possessor's life.
3. They appeal to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and not to the higher, nobler, and purer affections.

B. Why Lay Up Treasures That Are Temporary?

1. These are treasures that do not last.
2. At best, they are but temporary, and our days of having them are soon over.
3. At worst, in our brief sojourn, they have us, until we depart this life and leave them all behind.

C. Why Lay Up Treasures That Are Subject To Loss?

1. Those who trust in such treasures often find out, it is as Jesus said.
 - a. The moth, in satisfying his appetite, does not consider the worth of his meal, devouring the finest tapestry as readily as a discarded rag.
 - b. Rust enters the palaces of kings as it does the hovel of the destitute.
 - c. Thieves break through (dig through the wall) and steal without regard for the depth of attachment of the former possessor to his treasured belonging.
2. One may be wealthy today and lose it all, ending up a pauper on the morrow, losing not only the things he holds dear in life, but also his reason for living.
3. Why place such value on that which is so fleeting?

II. LAY UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES IN HEAVEN (Mat. 6:20).

A. Lay Up Treasures That Are Heavenly.

1. These treasures are not chosen under the direction of the outward man, but are the choice of the inward man whose faithful continuance leads him to that heavenly home.
2. At the close of day, the simple cow does not have to be forced from the far end of the pasture, but waits at the gate, ready to be taken to the barn for his feed, his treasure, is there, and his heart is there.
3. So, the child of God, at the close of his earthly day, is ready to go to where his treasure is—where his heart is.

B. Lay Up Treasures That Are Eternal.

1. That which is of real value is neither temporary nor transient, but timeless.
2. Why enslave ourselves to mammon, spend our lives seeking its gain, hoarding it greedily, when its possession is so soon to end, and our purpose for living ends with it?
3. That which is of real value is that which is of lasting value.

C. Lay Up Treasures That Are Not Subject To Loss.

1. Men may lose possessions, physical health, power, popularity, position, and that which brings pleasure, but the treasures that are heavenly will continue.
2. When the faithful servant of God leaves this earth, he leaves behind, as does the servant of mammon, all earthly things, but, unlike mammon's servant, he goes to Heaven where he has laid up his riches.
3. No force of nature, man, or the devil himself can remove these treasures from their heavenly store.

III. FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE WILL YOUR HEART BE ALSO (Mat. 6:21).

A. Where Are Our Thoughts?

1. Jesus warned: "Take no thought" for the things of this world.
 - a. "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on" (v.25).
 - b. "And why take ye thought for raiment?" (v. 28).
 - c. "Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" (v. 31).
 - d. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow" (v. 34).
2. The literal meaning of "take no thought" is "be not anxious"; that is, do not commit the folly of worrying about the earthly, material, temporal things of this world for, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" (v. 27).
 - a. Worry is unproductive, burdensome, and, more often than not, in vain.
 - b. Worry announces one's lack of faith in God and his fear that God will not provide as He has promised.
 - c. Worry robs one of peace, prevents happiness, presents an improper influence, and hinders his service to God.
3. Where a man's treasure is, there will his thoughts be also.

B. Where Is Our Trust?

1. In light of Jesus' statement that no man can, at the same time, serve mammon (the god of riches) and God (the God of true riches), in whom do we trust?
2. If our trust is in things, Jesus said we are like the Gentiles (literally, "nations," and, by implication, "heathen," who do not believe in God, "For after all these things do the Gentiles seek" [v.32]), but the same God who has given us our needs has promised to supply our needs.
3. Where a man's treasure is, there will his trust be also.

C. Where Is Our Treasure?

1. There will be our thoughts, our trust, and our hearts, centered either upon God or mammon!
2. There are only two places where one may lay up treasure—upon earth or in heaven.
3. If our treasure is laid up on earth, these sad conditions must also follow.

- a. We have failed to heed God's warning (v. 19).
- b. We have failed to follow God's command (v. 20).
- c. Our sight is out of focus, and we are in great darkness (vv. 22-23).
- d. We are mammon's servants (v. 24).
- e. We are too worried about things (v. 25).
- f. We have missed the lesson of God's compassionate care (v. 26).
- g. We have failed to consider the glory of God's creation (vv. 27-29).
- h. We have shown ourselves to be "of little faith" (v. 30).
- i. We have behaved as the heathen (vv. 31-32).
- j. We have failed to put first things first (v. 33).
- k. We have borrowed trouble, worrying about tomorrow, instead of trusting that God can take care of the future (v. 34).

CONCLUSION:

1. When We Consider Laying Up Treasure, There Are Some Important Questions That Deserve Our Careful Attention.
 - a. "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" (v. 25).
 - 1) The slave of mammon worries about these things.
 - 2) The servant of God is concerned about that which makes life precious, gives us purpose, and offers possibilities of godly service, while the servant of mammon is concerned about things that fill the belly and clothe the body.
 - 3) God's servant sees the value of making a life while mammon's servant can see only the need to make a living.
 - b. "Are ye not much better than they?" (v. 26).
 - 1) The Father, who made the birds, cares for them, supplying them with food.
 - 2) When was the last time you saw a worried bird?
 - 3) Of how much greater worth are God's children!
 - c. "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" (v. 27).
 - 1) One's worry over the measure of his life does not increase it.
 - 2) Being anxious about things will, instead, cause us not to profit in real riches.
 - 3) What a simple lesson, and how we need to learn it!
 - d. "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (v. 30).
 - 1) One of the greatest challenges to man is to trust in God's providential care.
 - 2) Where is our faith?
 - 3) Do we believe God will keep His word to His children?
2. What Shall We Treasure?
 - a. The lesson is this: there are some things men must not treasure and there are some things men must treasure.
 - b. If we treasure the earthly above the heavenly, our prosperity will come to a complete and final end when death comes (if not before).
 - c. If we treasure the heavenly above the earthly, our reward shall be abundant, heavenly, and eternal.

3. Remember These Points.

- a. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth.
- b. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.
- c. The divinely given reason: For where you treasure is, there will your heart be also.