

Laying Up Treasure in Heaven

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Introduction: Open your Bibles to **Matthew 6:19-21**. The title of our message is "Laying Up Treasure in Heaven".

We live at a very interesting time in human history. You and I live in the richest country on the planet and at the richest time in the history of the world. We are Christians and we have a massive amount at our disposal, but it seems we all have a great temptation to hoard our resources just like the world. That is why Matthew 6 was written. It was written for you and me.

Matthew 6:19-21, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

[Prayer]

The Lord has given us so many gifts, and we ought to use all He has given us for His glory. James says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (**James 1:17**). We are all given amazing gifts from God. We take so much for granted. We can walk, talk, see, and hear. None of us is starving. We have much to be thankful for. But let us understand, we were not created for these wonderful gifts. We were created for God.

All these gifts were given to us as a stewardship. They are not ours simply to enjoy, but to use for God's kingdom. We are to USE what God gives us for His glory, not to store these things us.

I. We ought not lay up treasure on earth. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth" (**verse 19**). Why?

A. First we ought not to lay up treasure on earth ***because riches don't satisfy***. Human beings love to turn God-given assets into addictions. We love to turn interesting and innocent things into idols. Our Lord forbids us from becoming addicted to His gifts. He says "don't do it!" Listen to Him: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth" (**verse 19**).

The problem is our heart is prone to love the good gifts of God more than God Himself. The foundational flaw with all of us is that we like to turn God-given assets into addictions and idols of the heart.

1. What is an idol? It is "trying satisfy our hearts with the gifts of God instead of God Himself". When we replace God with something else, it is idolatry. John Calvin said, "The human heart is an idol making factory". Anything that we love more than God is an idol. We were created to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.
2. What types of things are idols? According to **1 John 2:15-17**, people are addicted to three things mainly: pleasure [*lust of the flesh*], treasure [*lust of the eyes*], and the praise of men [*pride of life*]. Truly, for Christians, God is our pleasure, He is our treasure, and He is our praise. We were not created for things, but for God. Yet from birth, we are all naturally hooked to the idols of pleasure, possessions, and people's praises, and unless God saves us, we turn these things into addictions. In **Romans 1:25** Paul summarizes the history of the human race in one shocking sentence "They worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator". When we turn our assets into addictions, we are idol worshippers. This is BAD STEWARDSHIP.

Application: Most people spend their whole lives trying to get what they want. I want to fill you in on a secret that will shock you. Getting all that you want may make you the most **unhappy** person in the world. Why? Addicts are the most unhappy people in the world. Addictions can only fulfill you for a short amount of time, and then you need something bigger and better. You become a slave to your addiction.

When a person comes to know God, he or she is totally satisfied, because there is no one and nothing bigger or better than God!

- B. Secondly, we ought not to lay up treasure on earth ***because riches pass away***. **Verse 19**, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal".

Jesus is saying we ought not store up treasures on earth because they MIGHT be lost, but because they will ALWAYS be lost. Either our money leaves us when we live, or we leave it all when we die.

- **Proverbs 23:5**, "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not [will not last]? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven."
- **1 John 2:17**, "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever".

After John D. Rockefeller died, his accountant was asked, "How much did he leave behind?" He replied, "He left absolutely ALL of it!"

Illustration: Imagine you are living at the end of the Civil War in the South, but you are a Northerner. But you plan on moving north after the war. In the South you accumulated a lot of Confederate money. What are you going to do with that money? You know soon it will be worthless. If you are smart you are going to exchange it for something you know will last. You are going to exchange it for US dollars or gold.

Application: As a Christian, you know there is a coming worldwide collapse at Christ's return. All earthly treasure will be burned up. Earth's currency will become absolutely worthless to you upon Christ's return or when you die. If this were the stock market, this would be the ultimate trading tip. So Jesus Christ is instructing us to transfer our investments from earth to heaven.

There's nothing wrong with taking care of your needs, but stockpiling is foolish. All of our riches are going to pass away.

Luke 12:16-21, "And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: 17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. 20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

C. What are some ways we lay up treasure on earth?

- BY **SPENDING**: We purchase more than we can afford on time payments, so that there is little left over to give to God.
- BY **UPGRADING**: We constantly upgrade our standard of living, so that our increases in income are already committed.
When John Wesley was earning 30 British Pounds a year, he lived on 26 British Pounds and gave the rest to God. When his salary was raised to 60 British Pounds, he lived on 26 British Pounds and gave the rest to God.
- BY **WAITING**: We stifle our generosity when we say that we will give at another time, but that time never comes. We quench the impulse of the Holy Spirit to give by waiting.

Laying up treasure on earth is not simply wrong—it is truly foolish. Listen again to **Luke 12:20**, "this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Transition: Jesus doesn't just tell us where not to put our money, He gives us the best investment advice you'll ever hear: **Matthew 6:20**, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal".

II. Secondly, Jesus wants us to store up treasure. He's all for getting wealth, but He wants us to put it in the right place. He wants us to store up for **ourselves** treasures in heaven! Put it in the right place!

A. Don't lay up treasure on earth because you can't take it with you. This is a logical argument. On earth, thieves can steal things. Things break. Lay up treasure where no one can touch it.

You'll never see a hearse pulling a U-Haul! Because you can't take anything with you. **Psalm 49:16-17**, "Be not thou afraid [amazed] when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; 17 For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away".

B. You can't take earthly treasure with you, but you can send it on ahead!

- "I have held many things in my hands and I have lost them all. But whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess." Martin Luther
- John Wesley said, "I value all things only by the price they shall gain in eternity."

By supporting Christ's cause, we are investing our money in heaven. God is establishing local churches around the globe that are organized by the Holy Spirit. We ought to support Christ's work through missions, through giving to the local church, through giving to those preaching the Gospel here and around the world!

This is how we send it on ahead. Suppose I give you \$1000 today and give you the option to spend it all today, or you can wait and it will multiply.

Don't ask what you can get with your money this year. If you lay up your treasure in heaven, you will be benefiting from it ONE MILLION years from now!

C. If heaven is your home, then you will want to invest there. **This world is not our home. It is just a hotel room.**

As Christians, we are called to use the gifts that God has given to us for His glory, not to think that they are ours.

III. Finally understand God doesn't want your money. He wants your heart. God is not looking for donors. He is looking for worshippers. Christ says in Matthew 6, that we ought to lay up treasure in heaven because "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (**verse 21**).

God wants your heart! When you come to know Christ, He is your treasure! **Matthew 13:44**, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

When a person comes to know God, he or she is totally satisfied, because there is no one and nothing bigger or better than God!

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And **the things of earth will grow strangely dim,**
In the light of His glory and grace.

A. Money is an indicator of the heart. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also". When you are born again, all that you are is now Christ's. You are not your own. You are bought with a price!

That's why Jesus said in **Luke 14:33**, "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."

God doesn't want your money. He wants your heart. The one who lays up treasure in heaven understands that all that is on this earth is dung!

There's a greater value to treasure in heaven.

Philippians 3:7-8, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ".

Conclusion: Does God have your heart? Where is your treasure?