

“Lasting Treasure”

Stewardship 3 – Treasure

1)

Matthew 6:19-21

2)

March 3, 2019

May the Lord direct your hearts into God’s love and Christ’s perseverance. 2 Thessalonians 3:5

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

What do you make of Jesus’ words – **“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also?”** My first thought was to the word treasure – What do you treasure in life? What things do you love? Looking at a screen or tablet or phone. Maybe you think back to when you were a kid – the treasure map of a pirate in search of buried treasure. Whatever the treasure is – what Jesus is saying – is there our heart will be.

This morning, we want to think about where our heart is, spiritually speaking. Where does God desire our heart to be? We want to hear Jesus’ encouragement for us and for our hearts to be on true and lasting treasure.

If you look in your bible, you’ll notice the title of this section of Scripture that is titled “Treasures in Heaven.” This is part of Jesus’ sermon on the mount where Jesus is offering encouragement and words of wisdom on various topics and how God wants us to live in our lives of sanctification.

The first aspect we want to think about is – how money blinds us. That thought comes out in v 22-23 –

²²“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Not just physically speaking – being blind; but spiritually speaking, Jesus is telling us how we can be blind spiritually.

Have you ever thought of money being blinding? God’s gift of money and possessions blinding us to spiritual truths. It’s very easy to see how we lie, or cheat or lust. But when it comes to greed, it’s harder to see. How many of us would say – I’m a greedy person? The reason is because of the power and influence money can have over us.

It’s also one of the reasons Jesus has to warn – **“Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed.” (Luke 12:15)**

Jesus had to say watch out – b/c he knew how difficult it is for us to see. B/c if you were spiritually blind, you could not see it.

Where is your hear at right now? Jesus said in v 21 - **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.** In order to do this, we used to say – pull out your checkbook register. Nowadays, we don't do that as much as many use online banking. You may even have a nice-looking pie chart attached to your statement that shows, by category, where you spent your money – last month or last year. Categories with percentages – a portion to Food and dining, home expenses like rent or mortgage, bills and utilities, and on it goes.

The thing that we want to consider is not only how money blinds us, but also it's influence over us and how it can control us. Jesus went to say again in v 24 – **“No one can serve two masters. 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 both God and Money.**

As Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount, it wasn't just money, it was an ancient term that he used called “Mammon,” or everything including one's possessions. It's a word Martin Luther used in the Large Catechism. When he expounded on the 1st commandment, he equated “mammon” to the things that we place as our god – those things that our heart loves and treasures and adores, and many times does it ahead of God.

So what does your heart treasure? What motivates and drives you? It could be your children – you love them and spend a lot of time and money and attention to – accentuated by how much time you spend driving them to and from the gym or practice or event – b/c you love them.

It could be the stuff you have in life – or the entertainment things you get to experience and enjoy. It could be the cabin up north or the vacation you're planning to take with spring break coming up. Think about that pie chart. Is your treasure spent on entertainment? Your children? Is your treasure spent on earthly things? Or is it fixed on Jesus?

It's very easy to follow along with the ways of the world. It's very easy to say that pride is where your heart is and where your treasure is spent. For example, you could spend a lot of time

and money at the salon and spa, or on clothes – on things and stuff to make yourself look better.

None of these things are inherently bad. However, if we place our hope and trust, and our heart is on these things, then it cannot be on Jesus.

So, how do we get the right view of treasure, and certainly of the lasting treasure God wants us to have.

Jesus said – ²¹ **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.** What Jesus is saying is this – Locate your treasure; then Relocate your treasure. Or in other words – finding out where your heart is, and if it's in the wrong spot, finding out where it should be – relocating it.

When I thought about these verses for today, I thought about a recent conversation I had with Jerry, the auto mechanic. I recently bought a new vehicle. I had a 2004 Montana. But Jerry finally had to tell me – “I can't put your car up on the lift anymore. It's too rusted out.” So, I took our 2004 rusted-out Montana to the salvage yard and went out and bought a less rusted-out 2004 Cavalier.

When we hear these words of Jesus, we know exactly what rust is. We look at our cars out in the parking lot, and we see all the salt on our vehicles and we know that, over time, rust will eat through them too. It's good to wash them off in the winter time.

Jesus said – ¹⁹ **“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.**

How do we relocate our treasure in our lives? Go find your hope, security, identity, self-worth in something that will never change. The apostle Paul said in Colossians 3:2-3 – **set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.** ² **Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.** Here's what Jesus is saying – Unless you have me, you're not really rich. I'm the only currency that will never be devalued. My love is the one success and one status that you never want to lose. If we worship money and things, we'll never have enough.

We need to see why Jesus came to earth – Jesus had all the honor, wealth, beauty – in heaven – so why would he come to earth? There must have been something he didn't have in heaven – treasured on earth to come down for. He left it all behind. He was born in a manger. He was poor.

He left it all behind b/c – We're his treasure! The verse we had two weeks ago is a reminder of this – 1 Peter 2:9 – **“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God...** As we approach Lent, we see Jesus' suffering, his passion. When you see Jesus dying naked with nothing; when you see Jesus making you his treasure, it will make him your treasure. Then you'll start seeing money as just money. Then no worries.

Jesus knew how money can blind us; and how it can control us. He knew it can and would be a large problem for money. It's very alluring to our earthly passions and desires. Immediately after verse 24, Jesus started in v 25-34 – “Do Not Worry.” The things on earth that we spend our time and effort and money striving after here today and is gone tomorrow, brings us nothing but worry and trouble – if it blinds us and controls us. That's why Jesus said – **“Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you as well.”**

(Take a look at the bulletin insert)

Then explain this – Have you heard of the tithe – at least 10%? Does that seem enormous, unrealistic outrageous? What it is – giving an offering to the Lord and to the poor – giving to someone else rather than keeping it for yourself. When you love Jesus – truly love Jesus – then you'd have no problem giving your money away. You can do it. Fix your eyes on Jesus. Love him who loved you first. He is your true and lasting treasure. Amen.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7)

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