

Lesson 20 - TREASURES IN HEAVEN Matthew 6:19-24

(Matt. 6:19) - *“LAY NOT UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES UPON EARTH”* - The Lord now turns to deal with true Christian values that are written on the hearts of believers as we understand the spiritual and eternal nature of the kingdom of heaven and the sinful, corruptible, and dying nature of the kingdoms of this world - *“WHERE MOTH AND RUST DOTH CORRUPT, AND WHERE THIEVES BREAK THROUGH AND STEAL.”* This world is not our true home. And though we live IN the world, we are not OF the world (John 17:6-16; Php. 3:20). Being in the world temporarily, the Lord does not forbid us from having a “nest egg” for the future, owning property, or even working to gain wealth to enjoy our lives on earth. The Lord prospered many of His children - Job, Abraham, David, Solomon, Philemon. The Lord used the ant to teach us to give wise consideration for the future (Prov. 6:6-11). That which the Lord forbids here is an unholy and insatiable desire for the things of this world, especially that which would tempt us away from serving, worshiping, and thanking the Lord for His grace and goodness towards us in Christ, as well as serving and helping others, especially our brethren in Christ. Beware of greed - *“covetousness, which is idolatry”* (Col. 3:5). Many passages warn us about this - Mark 10:17-22; Job 31:24-28; Psalm 39:6; 62:10; Prov. 11:4; 16:15-16; Eccl. 2:11; 5:10-11; Luke 12:13-21; James 5:1-5; 1 Tim. 6:17-18. But consider that this not only deals with the love and pursuit of money. It includes attachments to this world that would eclipse our love for Christ, His people, and His truth (1 John 2:15-16). This is why we need to be dedicated to the Gospel and the Word of God *“which liveth and abideth for ever”* (1 Pet. 1:23-25).

(Matt. 6:20) - *“BUT LAY UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES IN HEAVEN”* - *“Lay up”* means “to gather, store, accumulate, keep in reserve.” This is not working to earn our rewards and blessings in heaven as if those who work the most get more rewards. We lay up treasures in heaven only by God’s grace and power as we believe, trust in, and look to Christ Who is our reward and from Whom we receive all spiritual blessings and benefits (Gen. 15:1; Rom. 8:32; Eph. 1:3). None of our blessings from God are earned or deserved by our works. They are all earned for us by the merits of Christ’s obedience unto death and freely given to us by God in Christ. They are described as *“an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time”* (1 Pet. 1:4-5). Let us set our hearts on the eternal blessings we have in Christ (Col. 3:1-3). *“WHERE NEITHER MOTH NOR RUST DOTH CORRUPT, AND WHERE THIEVES DO NOT BREAK THROUGH NOR STEAL”* - The kingdom of heaven has been established forever upon the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. His sceptre is a righteous sceptre, and He rules forever to save us and bring us to glory to enjoy our heavenly inheritance forever (Psalm 45:6; Heb. 1:8). Our treasure cannot be corrupted, eroded, or stolen from us because Christ is our treasure. As we mature in the faith and grow older in the world our value of *“TREASURES UPON EARTH”* diminishes and our value of *“TREASURES IN HEAVEN”* grows. We know now that no treasures upon the earth can save us, and they cannot last forever.

(Matt. 6:21) - *“FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE WILL YOUR HEART BE ALSO”* - The things we truly value reveal the state of our hearts. The whole Book of Ecclesiastes shows the vanity and vexation of life on this earth without knowing the glory of God in Christ and the Gospel of God’s saving grace through Christ and based on His wisdom in justifying the ungodly through the righteousness of Christ. Read, for example, Ecclesiastes 2 as it shows the worthlessness of setting our hearts on the things of this world rather than the things of God. Where is every true believer’s treasure? Read the following - *“For God, who commanded the*

light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have THIS TREASURE in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us” (2 Cor. 4:6-7).

(Matt. 6:22) - *“THE LIGHT OF THE BODY IS THE EYE: IF THEREFORE THINE EYE BE SINGLE, THY WHOLE BODY SHALL BE FULL OF LIGHT”* - The single eye refers to a regenerate (born again) person who has been given by God spiritual sight to see the light of God’s glory in Christ (Matt. 13:16; John 3:3-7). Unlike the Pharisees whom Christ described as the blind leading the blind (Matt. 15:14), true children of God are no longer blinded spiritually by Satan. They see someone and some things the world does not see because the world hates the light and loves darkness (John 3:19-20). They see their own sinfulness and depravity, and they see the impossibility of salvation by their works and their wills. They see the holiness and justice of God Who must hate and punish all who come before Him pleading anything other than Christ and His righteousness imputed. They see their only hope of salvation, forgiveness, righteousness, and eternal life is in the glorious Person and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their spiritual eyes are fixed firmly and singly upon Christ for all the blessings and benefits of salvation (2 Tim. 1:12). This is what the Apostle Paul meant when he wrote of *“the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Cor. 11:3)*. We lay up treasures in heaven by *“looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:2)*, and no one else. If this is our case, this light will consume our whole being so that we strive to keep our thoughts, motives, goals, and actions focused upon the glory of God in Christ.

(Matt. 6:23) - *“IF THEREFORE THE LIGHT THAT IS IN THEE BE DARKNESS, HOW GREAT IS THAT DARKNESS”* - If one is still spiritually blind (spiritually dead in trespasses and sins), having never been born again by the Holy Spirit, there is nothing but darkness. The evil eye symbolizes ignorance and unbelief of the Gospel of God’s grace, and this darkness renders everything we are and do as evil in the sight of God (John 3:19-20; Rom. 10:1-3). Like people today who read their Bibles but who never see the light of the glory of God in Christ (John 5:39-40), the Jews had been given the light of the Law of Moses which points sinners to Christ for salvation (John 5:45-46), and the light of the Gospel in type, picture, and prophecy. But rather than believing this light of truth, they rejected it and preferred their own way of self-righteous religion (Rom. 9:31-33). God left them in their ignorance and darkness. This is why we who see the light must acknowledge the great miracle of God’s grace to save us and give us eyes to see the light. God could have justly left us to our own ways and wills, but He chose to save us by His grace and bring us to the light that shines forth in the Person and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Matt. 6:24) - *“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”* - The opposite of a single eye and mind focused on Christ and treasures in heaven is a divided eye and mind seeking to serve two masters. *“Mammon”* signifies money, riches, substance, and everything that comes under the name of worldly goods. Remember, though we as believers are IN the world, we are not OF the world, and we cannot truly serve Christ while dividing our allegiance and devotion to Him with the self and the world. We read of the *“stony-ground”* and *“thorny-ground”* hearer in the parable of the soils (Matt. 13:20-22), both who loved the world more than Christ. Paul mentioned Demas who forsook him, *“having loved this present world” (2 Tim. 4:10)*. Apart from the effectual grace of God, the treasures of this world will choke out and eclipse the Word of God. Christ said, *“He that is not with Me is against Me” (Matt. 12:30)*.