

## Jesus Taught How to Have Treasure in Heaven

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to do those works that will have eternal value. We saw that we want to help them understand how they can have eternal rewards. In this topic, we will see that Jesus explained this more fully as He taught the disciples how to have treasure in heaven.

Matthew 6:19-21 says, “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.” The treasures of this earth do not last. When the richest man in the world dies, he will leave behind everything he has. He will take nothing with him. In these verses, we see that there are also other ways that the riches of this world are destroyed. Jesus listed three specific ways that riches were often destroyed in that day.

First, riches can be destroyed by the moth. The word translated “moth” is used three times in the New Testament. Two are in these verses and the third is in a similar passage, in Luke 12:33-34, where we read, “Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” The clothes moth is able to eat holes in clothes. As a result, those who used their treasure to buy expensive clothes could find that moths had destroyed their expensive clothes and they no longer had any value.

Second, riches can be destroyed by rust. The word translated “rust” speaks of the act of eating and pointed out the fact that various metals could be eaten away by corrosion. The two times that this word is translated “rust” are both in these verses. The word translated “corrupt” means *to put out of view or to cause to vanish away*. By the use of this word, Jesus made it clear that the metals people use to try and keep their riches can quickly vanish and disappear. Third, riches can be stolen by those who break in and steal. Jesus pointed out, in John 10:10, that Satan has certain goals and those who follow him may have the same goals. That verse says, “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.” As a result, the riches of this world can disappear in a variety of ways.

Jesus said, instead, that the place to store lasting treasures is in heaven because none of these things can touch treasure that is stored in heaven. God gives a promise about treasures stored in heaven, in 1 Corinthians 3:12-14, where we read, “Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward.” When we build on the foundation of Christ by doing those things that have eternal value, we are sending our treasures ahead where nothing on earth can destroy them and where God will also reward them.

However, Jesus focused on the heart by His next statement when He said in verse 21, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Our heart is our inner man and it determines how we see everything in the world. Jesus said here that those who are storing up their treasure in heaven do so because their heart is focused on spiritual things. Paul illustrated this so well when he said, in Philippians 3:10, “That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.” Then, he

added in Philippians 3:13-14, “Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

In contrast, those who are storing up their treasure on earth have their hearts focused on the things of this world. Jesus told the rich young ruler, in Mark 10:21-22, “Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, ‘One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.’ But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.” This young man chose to store up his treasure on earth. His heart was focused on earthly things and he had nothing when death came.

Jesus went on to say, in Matthew 6:22-23, “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!” Here, we see that the actions of a person show what is in the heart. Those who have their treasure on this earth will see things in one way, while those who have their treasure in heaven will see things very differently. This is illustrated so well in Genesis 6. Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.” Here, we see that most of the people had their whole body full of darkness because the thoughts of their hearts were only evil continually. The actions of the people are described in Genesis 6:11, where we read, “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.” The actions produced by that darkness were corruption and violence.

In contrast, Genesis 6:8 says, “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.” Noah had eyes that were good because his heart was filled with light. Genesis 6:22 tells us how his actions were different from the rest of the people, when that verse says, “Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.” Here, we see that Noah had his treasure in heaven and so he chose to be obedient to God. Hebrews 11:7 shows us that the results of his actions were very different. That verse says, “By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” Noah saved his household and inherited the righteousness that is the result of faith because he stored his treasures in heaven.

Matthew 6:24 goes on to say, “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.” The word translated “mammon” means *earthly riches and especially money*. The word is used four times in the New Testament and the other three are all in Luke 16. Luke 16:9 says, “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.” Luke 16:11 says, “Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*?” Then, Luke 16:13 says the same thing that Matthew 6:24 says.

Jesus taught the verses mentioned in Luke 16 to His disciples at a time when the Pharisees were listening. We see the response of the Pharisees, in Luke 16:14, where we read, “Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him.” The Pharisees taught that riches were proof of God’s blessing and that those who were rich were the favorites of God. Here, we see that, in their hearts, they were lovers of money. 1 Timothy 6:9-10 warns, “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. 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.” In these verses, we see that a love of money is a root of all kinds of

evil.

In contrast, 1 Timothy 6:17-19 says, “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.” In these verses, we see that if a person has riches, God has given him those riches so he can use them to serve others and store up treasure in heaven. If the Lord is our Master, we will use the money He has given to us to serve Him by doing good works that will glorify God.

God says that it is impossible for a person to serve both God and money. 2 Corinthians 5:7 says, “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” Then, James 1:6-10 says, “But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away.” In order to walk by faith, we must make the Lord the Master of our lives whether we are rich or poor. Many times, it is easier for the poor to learn to walk by faith because James 2:5 says, “Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?” However, the key is that we make the Lord our Master and use whatever money He has given us wisely, so we can store up treasure in heaven.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to make the Lord their Master so their lives will bring glory to Him also. This will result in the fact that they will use their lives to serve the Lord and not to serve self. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children, by your example, how to bring glory to God.