

## Store up Treasures in Heaven (subtitle: A Wise Investment)

Matthew 6:19-21 (New American Standard Bible)

<sup>19</sup> “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; <sup>21</sup> for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

### Introduction

What does come to your mind when you hear a word “Treasures?” What are your treasures? Very few of us think of the word in non-monetary terms. Rather, most of us think of it as gold, silver, or jewelry. Or bank accounts. With one exception of a man: *I don't have much money, but I am rich, because my house is full of love, joy, and peace.* Amen to that!

Anyway, today we are going to think about treasures that Jesus talks about. The treasures that really matter in our life, both temporal and eternal.

### Content

The Oxford Advanced American Dictionary defines treasures as: [uncountable] a collection of **valuable** things (such as) gold, silver, and jewelry. <sup>2</sup> [countable, usually plural] a highly valued object (such as) *the priceless art treasures of the Metropolitan Museum.*

From this definition, I can safely say that treasures are something that **we highly value.** What are the things that you highly value? Gold, silver, and jewelry? A collection of paintings and artifacts, and even family heirlooms? To some, treasures are not the things but the people such as family members and friends. Or the memories. What are yours? Whatever they are, and no matter how highly you value them, Jesus commands never to lay them up here on earth.

Before we go back to Jesus, let me introduce to you King Solomon this morning. This man had it all: the wealth and pleasure in the world in his time. Speaking of earthly treasures, there was no man who had more than King Solomon in his time. You listen to his own word:

**Solomon's testimony:** *I said to myself, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure. So enjoy yourself.” And behold, it too was futility. <sup>2</sup> I said of laughter, “It is senseless,” and of pleasure, “What does this accomplish?” <sup>3</sup> I explored with my mind how to refresh my body with wine while my mind was guiding me wisely; and how to seize foolishness, until I could see what good there is for the sons of mankind to do under heaven for the few years of their lives. <sup>4</sup> I enlarged my works: I built houses for myself, I planted vineyards for myself; <sup>5</sup> I made gardens and parks*

*for myself, and I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees; <sup>6</sup>I made ponds of water for myself from which to irrigate a forest of growing trees. <sup>7</sup>I bought male and female slaves, and I had slaves born at home. I also possessed flocks and herds larger than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup>I also amassed for myself silver and gold, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I provided for myself male and female singers, and the pleasures of the sons of mankind: many concubines.*

*<sup>9</sup>Then I became great and increased more than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also stood by me. <sup>10</sup>All that my eyes desired, I did not refuse them. I did not restrain my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor; and this was my reward for all my labor. <sup>11</sup>So I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold, all was futility and striving after wind, and there was no benefit under the sun (Ecclesiastes 2:1-11).*

**Solomon's conclusion about earthly treasures: Vanity.** Solomon had it all, done it all, yet in the end, his conclusion was, it's all vanity. Useless!

Let's listen to Jesus now in today's text: <sup>19</sup>*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup>But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; <sup>21</sup>for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

Jesus points out the futility of storing up treasures on earth. Because moth and rust destroy them. And, because thieves steal them away. Both individually and even nationwide. History proves this truth. I heard an expression before that the wealth of the rich does not last even three generations. Did you know that all Solomon's glory and wealth were also plundered within 500 years after he died, and no one remembers today where they have gone? Destroyed and stolen, as Jesus said.

**Storing up treasures is OK.** Now, Jesus never said that we should never store up treasures. *It's OK to have them and store them up, He says. But, choose wisely what and where you store up. Choose not the treasures that will be destroyed or stolen, He commands. Choose instead the treasures that are safe eternally. Store them up not on earth, He commands. Store up in Heaven instead. After all is said and done, He asks us to ponder, will your treasures be there for you or not? Will they matter, even after you die?*

So, for the rest of my sermon, I am going to tell you about the treasures that will last and matter forever. The treasures that don't get destroyed or stolen. The treasures that are safe in Heaven. The treasures that we can bring out and use in Heaven. I would call them heavenly treasures.

**Nature of heavenly treasures:** They coincide with the nature of Heaven where nothing corrupts, where no thieves allowed. Therefore, heavenly treasures never decay. Never get stolen, either. Basically, they last forever. And, they are useful in Heaven.

When do you start storing up treasures in Heaven? The way I see it is this: You start it here and now. We start storing up our heavenly treasures while we are alive. You don't have to die to do so.

By the way, where do you store up your treasures? In Heaven. But, your work begins in your heart. Jesus says in verse 21: *Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* Your heart is the treasury: *The good person out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil person out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart* (Luke 6:45).

**Heart is the treasury (v. 21).** Start storing up what matters eternally in your heart! I have discovered in the Scriptures five things that matter eternally. Jesus commands us to store them up in our hearts.

First, **the Word of God.** The Psalmist says, *I have treasured Your word in my heart, So that I may not sin against You* (Psalm 119:11). He also says, *The Law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces* (Psalm 119:72). Did you know Mary the Mother of Jesus had a habit of treasuring God's Word in her heart? *But Mary treasured all these things* (the words she heard from angel, shepherds, and prophets), *pondering them in her heart* (Luke 2:19. See also 2:51). How are we doing on this front?

Next, store up and keep **the Holy Spirit** in your heart. We do have both Holy Spirit and Christ Jesus in our hearts: *Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you* (1 Corinthians 6:19). *Christ dwells in our hearts through faith* (Ephesians 3:16-17).

Thirdly, **the fear of the Lord** is our treasure. *And He will be the stability of your times, A wealth of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; The fear of the LORD is his treasure* (Isaiah 33:6).

Fourthly, we store up **good works** as our heavenly treasure: *Looking at him, Jesus showed love to him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me"* (Mark 10:21, Luke 18:22). Paul the apostle reminds the rich to be rich in good works, and be generous and ready to share their wealth which equals to storing up the treasures for themselves in Heaven: <sup>18</sup> *Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,* <sup>19</sup> *storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life* (1 Timothy 6:18-19).

Lastly, **almsgiving and prayers** are remembered and stored up in Heaven. In Matthew 6, Jesus talks about two kinds of treasures in Heaven: *giving to the needy and prayers*. That's exactly what Cornelius (the Roman centurion) did: *Angel said to him, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God (Acts 10: 4).*

### **Conclusion**

One last thing: God allows you to store up treasures for **yourself (v. 20)**. Jesus commands you to do so in Heaven not on earth. Whether you actually do so or not, He totally leaves it up to you, doesn't He? For He is the God of love who never forces you to do anything you don't want to do. Choose wisely, therefore. One thing is for sure: If you listen to Jesus, you will be wise forever and laugh at last. Stop storing up treasures on earth and start storing up treasures in Heaven. By the way, it is a command not a suggestion. Those who obey His command will be blessed.

Start storing up in your heart heavenly treasures such as: *The Word of God, the Holy Spirit, the fear of the Lord, good works, and almsgiving and prayer.* Amen.