

Our Treasures
Luke 12:32-34

As I have lingered over this particular portion of scripture for the past few weeks, where Jesus is teaching about what our attitude of heart ought to be towards matters of money and possessions, time and time again, I find yet another and then another very special Spiritual truth that I feel compelled to include within this study. So, I'll ask that you bear with me as I spend at least this one more week here within these words of Luke chapter 12, beginning with verse 32. Listen!

³²"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³Sell what you have and give to the needy; 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. ³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Luke 12:32-34)

One of those special truths that I find in these words concerns itself with the repetitive nature through which Jesus teaches His disciples.

Often, we find that His truths are given once, then twice, then again, sometimes within the same context, sometimes in differing contexts, sometimes being recorded by one gospel writer, and then by another, but ever expanding, ever advancing, and ever progressing so as to lift and to carry those who desire to seek after the Lord, on up to that "higher plane" that one of our favorite Christian hymns speaks about.

His manner and method of teaching is very intentional and is very effective. But again, that is so only for those who truly desire to know more of Him, to know more about His precious truths, to know more about His purposes for our lives.

And that bespeaks the intent of the first truth that I would like for us to consider today, that of the immeasurable importance of intentionally getting into and remaining continually within His presence.

For the disciples, it was walking with Jesus, following Him wherever He would go, ever listening, ever hearing, ever participating with Him in His efforts to share the gospel.

For you and for me, it needs to manifest itself in our having daily private study times in these scriptures, in our faithful attendance at our church, and then also our joining together with other fellow believers in group bible studies.

Too often, I have been asked the question, “does a Christian really have to go to church to be a Christian?” And while the answer to that question is no, the greater answer is, “if a person wants to be the Christian that Jesus wants him or her to be, then yes, they must continually get into His presence and remain there, ever listening, ever hearing and ever learning of His precious truths.

And that learning can take place especially well as we join ourselves together with other believers within a church setting, rubbing shoulders with other people within the body of Christ, giving help and guidance to them, while also receiving help and guidance from them.

And so, may I say this again, if a person really wants to be the Christian that Jesus wants him or her to be, then getting into His presence among other believers and remaining there, listening, hearing and learning of His precious truths is the best way of knowing how to be the person God wants us to be.

Folks, it's only through our continual receiving of His truths in these scriptures that His Voice, and the meaning of His words, begin to become clear to us and we begin to develop a deep yearning to be like Him.

But why? Why is persistence so necessary? Why can we not just be told something once and it be a settled matter within our souls?

The answer to that question is a relatively simple one. It has everything to do with the corrupt nature that resides within our souls, that nature that first began the moment that Adam and Eve decided to turn away from God's Lordship over them and to venture out onto their own path. And unfortunately, that corrupt nature is even stronger today than it has ever been, and getting progressively worse, continually driven by the culture wars taking place around us.

And that corrupt nature manifests itself in all that we think, say and do. As the words of Romans 7 remind us, our souls are the battlegrounds where a war is being fought between the two avowed enemies who abide within us, the Spirit

of Christ and my “old fleshly self”, those unceasing, moment by moment battles between right and wrong, good and evil, blessings and cursing.

Listen again to some of those words given in Romans chapter 7 describing the battle that takes place within most every soul who would desire to follow after the Lord Jesus. Verse 15,

15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. . . . 19 . . . what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. (Romans 7:15-19)

Whether we recognize it or not and despite whether we understand and are able to articulate its presence, this battle truly does rage within your and my souls most of the moments of our day.

And the results of those battles loudly declare themselves in the many “failings of the soul” that Jesus spoke to His disciples about, the worries and the concerns about the food they would eat, the clothes they would wear and the covetous spirit that goes hand-in-hand with the abundance of possessions, little battles and big battles raging continually within the hidden recesses of our souls, most often with the battle cry of “never enough, never enough”.

And in these and other words like them, Jesus sought to teach our beleaguered souls about the only real cure and remedy available for the corrupt nature that resides within us.

And Jesus, no doubt gave these words about our concerns and worries about money and treasures on several occasions as He traveled about and preached and taught the people He encountered. And I especially enjoy the way He gave it on the occasion when He was teaching the people in Matthew chapter 6. Those words are similar to our passage here in Luke 12, but with some added words. Listen to these words given in Matthew chapter 6,

¹⁹“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²²“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³But 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! (Matthew 6:19-23)

And again, these words have a strong tie to the warnings given in 1 John 2, warnings about the lusts that well up within us for all those treasures of this world that our eyes and our flesh desire. There we are warned to,

¹⁵Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (1 John 2:15-16)

And continuing on here in Matthew 6, verse 24, Jesus said,

²⁴“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.

²⁵“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

²⁷Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

²⁸“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?

³¹“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. (Matthew 6:24-33)

Here in verse 21 of Matthew 6 and also in verse 34 of Luke 12, we read one of the defining verses as to why all this takes place within us, the battles, the worries and the lusting after the things our eyes see. Here we read,

³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:34)

And our hearts do so “treasure” the things that we lust after and acquire in the pursuits of this life. And God knows that we do treasure those things and He

gives us warning after warning about how our hearts can go astray within those pursuits.

Recall again those words of Jeremiah that I quote so often to you,

⁹ "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? ¹⁰ I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind. Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.
(Jeremiah 17:9-10)

Folks, all those things that we mistakenly think are hidden in the deep recesses of our heart and mind are not hidden from God. He knows what we treasure most in this life. And He knows how desperately wicked our hearts can really be.

How can He know? It is as He has just told us in verse 10 of Jeremiah 17. Every moment of every day, He tests our minds, every one of us, and He knows every one of our thoughts. He knows exactly what you and I are thinking right at this very moment.

Psalm 139,

¹ O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. ² You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. ³ You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. ⁴ Before a word is on my tongue, you know it completely, O LORD. (Psalm 139:1-4)

God knows every thought that flows to and fro within our minds, right at this moment, and at every moment. He knows exactly what you and I treasure most in this life.

Here in these words, Jesus speaks especially to our concerns about money and possessions, and not just about getting rich, but about the basic necessities of life, what we will eat and what we will drink and what we will wear.

But beyond simple concerns, Jesus speaks about our worries and our anxieties about those things. And it is those worries that He especially wants to dispel.

But why? It is because those worries, those concerns, those anxieties affect us in several different ways, all of them wrongly.

On the simplest level, those worries occupy our minds with thoughts like, “we don’t have enough money to pay the rent or to buy food or to get the car fixed.”

And then, as with many of us, even bigger bills are put upon us suddenly by some health crisis, or by storm damage, or by a change in the financial market.

As some of us get older and more dependent upon a good retirement income, we read where the government plans to cut our Social Security and Medicare benefits.

We see so many elderly people still working and most of them in low paying jobs, just trying to make ends meet. Their 401K was running out too soon.

And yes, right at this moment, to one extent or another, some of us, you and me are probably experiencing some of those very same worries. How can I know that to be true? It is because Jesus saw fit to say it here in these words. And as we said a moment ago, He knows our every thought. And He knows about the propensity within us to worry about all the troublesome matters of daily life.

But lest we leave this passage and miss out on the real message that lies behind these words of Jesus, let me address the deeper issue about worry. It is simply this.

To worry, to fret, to be anxious about these matters of daily life, what we will eat, what we will drink and what we will wear, and other such worries, bespeaks “distrust” within our hearts. That’s why the Lord Jesus so often uses the words, “Oh ye of little faith”.

And even worse, to worry, to be anxious about such things as these, bespeaks a belief within us that God either cannot or will not be faithful to keep His word.

But He says to us,

²⁵ . . . do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? . . . ³⁰ Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?

³¹“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. (Matthew 6:25-33)

Folks, the simple truth is, for us to worry can go so far as to be an affront to God saying, “God, I do not believe you and I do not believe these words. You are untrustworthy to meet my needs. I will have to meet my needs on my own.”

That kind of response from us is wrong, very wrong, but to some degree or another, it still takes place within each of our souls far too often.

You and I have things, and needs, and desires that we treasure. And here Jesus is saying to us, “Don’t do that! Don’t treasure such things and especially, do not worry about them, but instead!”

³³ . . . seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.(Matthew 6:33)

. . . Before we conclude our thoughts and considerations about the things that we “treasure” most within this life, while yes, these words of scripture concern themselves most with matters of money and the possessions we own, may I ask that we go a step beyond those thoughts and considerations to some of the other matters of life that we do often hold as “treasures” within our hearts. Here in verse 34, Jesus tells us simply that,

³⁴ . . . where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Luke 12:32-34)

May I suggest that while we might not consider such things as our “ideas”, our “philosophies”, and especially our “feelings” as being “treasures”, folks, we do often guard them in our heart as if they were “treasures”. And please note also that implicit within these words from the Lord Jesus is a “warning” to us, a warning that some, perhaps many of those other kinds of “treasures” might be “questionable” before the Lord.

Perhaps it's the “treasure” of long held “bitterness” coming from a past relationship. I know of several people who are angry and bitter at the “church” in general, and consequently at God. Some former church members treated them unkindly, even harshly, perhaps even shaming them. And even the Pastor

was not supportive. And so now, they hold onto that “bitter treasure” and don't go to any church at all.

Also, at the top of many lists, we “treasure” the bitterness that has come from past “family disagreements and separations”. And we haven't spoken to those family members in years.

And yes, the list of such harmful “treasures” could go on and on.

And the question for you and for me today is, “Do you, do I have some of those strongly held “treasures” right at this moment. And what do we know that the scriptures tell us that we should do with those kinds of “treasures”. One of the simplest answers comes to us in 1 John 1:8-9,

⁸ If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.(1 John 1:8-9)

We need to confess some of our “treasures” as the sin we know them to be and begin today to move on from them.

But lest we end this study today on a negative note, may we stop and consider some of those “treasures” that we know that our Lord would have us to hold onto.

For us as Christians, at the top of our list of “treasures” should rightfully be our relationship with the Lord Jesus. And it should be a growing relationship. And then we should probably consider our relationships within our families to be our next “treasure”. For me, I “treasure” my wife and my children at the highest of levels. And then, after our families, some of us will hold our relationships within the church in the very highest of esteem. And along with all of these, I personally “treasure” some of my friendships very highly.

And yes, “treasures” like these should go on and on. And we know that our Lord approved of these kinds of “treasures” because they are part of the first and greatest commandment, “to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, all of our soul, all of our mind and all of our strength, and then to love other people as the Lord Jesus loves them.” And Praise be to God for such a love!

Let's Pray.

