

Matthew 6-19-34 Manuscript

Laying Up Treasures in Heaven

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Bible Text: Matthew 6:19-34

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Matthew 6:19

"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 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! 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.

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? Look 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? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 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? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.¹

¹ Matthew 6:19-34.

The Lord Jesus is instructing his disciples on a hill and in the same way that he is speaking to us in our church today. He is desiring to unify His disciples around a principle of the laying up of treasure. And when I read these words that Jesus is giving to his disciples, it makes me think of what an amazing thing it would be for an entire church to be completely unified around this principle of laying up treasures in heaven. Imagine

that. Imagine an entire church bent on nothing else but the laying up of treasures in heaven.

And that is what Jesus is doing with these disciples. He is speaking to them, face to face, in a very personal way to unify them around this great principle. And he is speaking to us in the same way and he is speaking to them.

Now this whole chapter is about laying up treasure somewhere, either in heaven or on the earth. And Jesus has been walking through a progression of thought to help his disciples understand what is driving them, why they are doing what they are doing. All this, so that they can know whether they are laying up treasures on earth or whether they are laying up treasures in heaven.

All of chapter six is focused on this. Our Lord has already said that you can give alms and lay up treasures on earth or in heaven, either way. You can pray and even though you are doing a religious thing, you can either be laying up treasures on the earth or in heaven. The same principle applies to with fasting and prayer.

He begins with religious things, and now he turns to things that are far more outward. He turns to our physical, material life. His focus in this text is the things we acquire, the things that we give our minds to, our eyes to, our energies to. So he has begun with religious things and then now he begins to deal with what you might call more temporal things.

Jesus is dealing with his disciples on the matter of treasure.

Now this is a very urgent matter which is so clearly demonstrated by the number of imperatives that are in this text. This urgent matter takes us right to the heart of the gospel - no one can serve two masters. You are either serving one master or the other. That is the heart of the gospel. The call of the gospel is to serve one master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is the master, the devil, who abuses his children. We have all been abused by this master. Whenever we have served him, we have always lost. No one ever gains anything of any eternal value by serving that master. We might lay up treasures on this earth, but we will find at the end of our lives that we will have absolutely nothing left.

And so Jesus Christ is coming to bring the glory of the gospel that we can be delivered from this abusive, harmful master, the devil, by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, by trusting in his death and his resurrection and being caught up to eternal life as a result. He is bringing us to the heart of the gospel. He is identifying the point in someone's life where they say, "I cannot, I will not serve that master anymore. And I need a new master. I need the good Shepherd to lead me."

Not only does Jesus bring us to the heart of the gospel, He also brings us to consider the fact that there are two kinds of treasure. He says, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth."

I. Treasures, v19-21

So The Lord begins with a prohibition which is also warning. When Jesus is talking about treasures on earth, the first thing that he wants to do is to dampen our zeal of them. He is trying to rain on our parades regarding treasures on earth. He is trying to qualify and put them in their proper perspective so that you will know their relative importance. And so the first thing he says is, "Do not..." And he does that to dampen our zeal for laying up treasures on the earth. And that is the first thing that we are confronted with.

All of us are in pursuit of various kinds of treasures. But the first thing that we need to understand is that Jesus Christ is dampening our zeal for the acquisition of treasures on the earth.

1. Treasures on earth

What does he mean by treasure? Is it money? Is it a house? The term that Jesus uses is actually a very broad term that would include a house or cash or anything else that one might place in high regard. So a treasure can be anything. You can treasure your reputation or family or nation or even your education too much. There are so many things that we treasure in this life. We might treasure our looks and the way that we have had decided to present ourselves.

Often you can find the trail to your treasure by what you are embarrassed about, what you worry about, what you work on, what you focus on.

There are many people who really don't care very much about money, but they care greatly about other things. Whenever you find someone who doesn't care about money, you always find that they care about something greatly. Everyone is in pursuit of some kind of treasure.

Treasures "for yourselves"

"Do not lay up."

And then these two words are so important to understand what Jesus is teaching for yourselves. Lay up treasures for yourselves.

Now we know that God does give treasure to some people. He does. In fact the Bible says that he is the one that gives you the power to gain wealth. And so that may happen to you. But the question is: Do you view it as for yourself? Is it your own? Did you desire it for yourself, for your own reputation, for your own comforts? Did you desire and get it, for your own self aggrandizement so that people would think well of you? That is what

Jesus has been dealing with all along. Don't give alms so that people will think well of you. Don't pray so people will think well of you. Don't fast so people will think well of you. There is an entirely different kingdom that is meant to be served.

And so he is identifying these kinds of treasures that his disciples need to be aware of.

And so here we are gathered together this morning. We are his disciples. The Lord Jesus is here among us. We are hearing the voice of Jesus Christ in His Church to dampen our zeal for the accumulation of various kinds of treasures *for ourselves*. And that is the key interpretive principle.

There is tremendous danger here for us. There are terrible traps because these things can engulf our whole lives and become the driving force of everything of how we talk, how we look, how we spend our time. Jesus is going to lead us to consider our innermost being to the things that we worry about. He is laying before us this whole matter of treasure so that we can think about what it is that we treasure and are we laying up treasures for ourselves?

Now treasures can be neutral like money can be neutral. But the problem is that we are not neutral. We have a sin nature. So treasures in the hands of sinners is dangerous because we are handling these gifts of God whether they be family, whether they be a nation, whether they be the wealth that God has allocated to us by his own sovereign hand. Whatever it might be, we have to recognize that whatever we handle is dangerous for us to handle because of our sin nature. It is not the thing that is dangerous. It is our love for treasure that is dangerous. These are lethal matters for us. They can be so lethal that they would actually destroy our souls in hell. This is why Jesus is identifying two kinds of treasures. There are treasures on earth and there are treasures in heaven.

And so as we consider this as a church together, my prayer for myself and for all of us is that somehow we can take steps forward in this area, that we would become more about building treasures in heaven and less building treasures on the earth. I am not confident if in a given day we can spend every minute of the day for treasures in heaven. But the Lord by his Spirit can bring us back. He can reel us in to help us see the world the way it really is so that we wouldn't be the kind of people that we would end up and having lived and done so much and thought so much and worked so much that we would have nothing left at the end of our lives.

Why this is important

And so he begins to explain why. He has first warned us. He has spoken of the real issue that they are for ourselves. He tells us why this is so important. Treasures on earth are treasures, "Where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal."

He is showing us the end of all things. He is taking us to the end of our lives and showing what it might be like. Imagine that you have labored and you have talked and you have lived so much and at the very end you have nothing left to show for it. Jesus is desiring to save his disciples from living an irrelevant life. He is saving them from getting to the end and have it take their breath away that they had done things for the wrong reasons.

Three problems with treasures on earth

Notice there are three things that he identifies to help us understand what happens to

treasures on earth: moth, rust and thieves. Moths, they come in from the outside and they eat it away. Rust, actually becomes part of the object and eats it away from the inside, in a sense. And then thieves, they come and they just take it all away.

Jesus is kind of giving an accelerating understanding of what he is talking about to help us understand what the world is really all about. Every single thing that you own is decaying. It will come to nothing. It will be eroded, corroded, eaten and finally completely taken away. And so this is why Jesus would be so clear to dampen the zeal of his disciples for these things, because in the end, they all are passing away.

We have to think about our lives that way, even our bodies which are passing away.

And some of you who are in your teens and 20s don't quite understand what that means. But it means that your bodies are going to be not as beautiful as they are now. Finally, when they lower you into the grave, if you die of old age, anyway, there really won't be all that much beauty left physically. This is the way that God has designed the world. And you had better understand that really early in your life or you will spend your whole life wasting yourself on how you look. God forbid that you would waste thousands and thousands of wasted hours in your life as you try to prop up the various things that have become your treasures.

So here Jesus is saying that they are eroding and corroding and being eaten and they will finally be stolen, which means that we shouldn't get too attached to them. We should not worry about them too much. They are on the way out. They will finally be destroyed.

So in verse 20 he says, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."

2. Treasures in heaven

Jesus just doesn't leave his disciples with the discouraging message that everything is going to be destroyed. He says, no, that there are treasures in heaven

We do not have to live for things that pass away because there are things that don't pass away. There are things that you can devote yourself today that will last forever and you will not be wasting your life. This an enormous encouragement, because if we were just left with decay and corruption, then what would we do? We would have to say, "Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die." That is how we would have to live. And that is how most people do live.

But here we are actually given an alternative in order to lay up treasures in heaven. You do it by your giving of alms. You do it by your prayers. You do it by fasting so that you are setting the prisoners free, so that you are advancing the spread of the gospel, so that you are dealing properly with the poor. In doing so, you are casting your bread out on the waters and it is multiplying. It is eternal in its significance..

So we are either, at any given time, laying up one of two kinds of treasures, because there are only two kinds of treasure. There is treasure on the earth and treasure in heaven. So this should be a principle that should just guide everything that we do. No matter where we are and no matter what we are doing, this is the most important question. Where am I laying up my treasure? And you could ask yourself that question at any given moment in the day or the night.

Treasure and the heart

So Jesus now begins to go deeper in the matter to help us understand a principle about treasure. And that is this. You can always know what your treasure is by examining your heart, because where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. It is wonderful to see the clarity that Jesus brings.

How can I know whether I am laying up treasures on the earth or treasures in heaven. I can know by what my heart treasures. You can examine your heart and pray, “What do I value the most? What is it that I worry about? What is it that I spend my days doing? What are the things that I am strategizing about? And do these things involve laying up treasures in heaven or on the earth?”

Jesus comes and he explains that these two matters, the two kinds of treasures can be determined by the heart. And notice Jesus doesn't stop with the heart, but he speaks of something that is connected to the heart and that happens to be the eyes.

The lamp of the body

“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?”

So he speaks of two different kinds of eyes in the same way. There are two kinds of treasures. There are also two kinds of eyes.

Jesus reveals to us that there are two kinds of eyes. There is the single eye and then there is the double eye. There is the good eye or the bad eye. And so what Jesus is saying is that you can know whether you are laying up treasures on heaven or on earth by the way that you use your eyes, by the things that delight your eyes, by the things that your eyes love.

We are wired in such a way that our eyes always take us in a direction. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The same thing with your eyes. What your eyes love, you will gravitate toward. And this will be your treasure.

The Bible has much to say about the eyes. Job said, “Why does your heart carry you away and what do your eyes wink at?” Job connects the two, the eyes and the heart together. They are intimately connected. Proverbs 22:9 says, “He who has a generous eye

will be blessed for he gives bread to the poor.” So there is a kind of an eye that is generous and when it encounters the poor it blesses the poor. And the eyes really lead us in our lives. Where our eyes go is where we go. We sort of cast our gaze to something and our hearts follow it like that.

Those of you who have ever taken a tactical driving course or ridden a motorcycle for any amount of time know that it really matters where your eyes are focused. For example, if you are riding a motorcycle and you are going between two posts and you look at the post, you are most likely going to hit the post. And so Jesus is using this illustration of the eyes to help us understand that we know it is true in so many other kinds of experiences in our lives.

The Lord is bringing these three different categories to us: the heart, the eyes and the will. But these things here, these are the fundamental driving forces in our lives. These are the things that make us really who we are. If you would know anything about life, you have to know two things. You have to know yourself and how you are wired and you have to know God. Those are the two things that man needs to know

We also know from Scripture it matters what your ears hear. It matters where your feet go. The uses of our eyes are so defining. This is why the whole teaching of Scripture about images is so important to us. Images are enormously powerful to us. We have to be very careful at the images that we look at because they take our souls in a direction. You can't look at anything without having it affect your soul somehow. That is why Jesus said, “If your right eye causes you to sin, cast it from you.” It is more profitable for you to lose your eye. He is speaking about profit. And so there are ways that we use our eyes that are either for our profit or for our demise. And so Jesus is just continuing to explain how important the eyes are as he already has earlier when he gave the illustration regarding adultery about the eyes.

These three forces in our lives, the way they interplay with one another are so important for us to understand. You who are raising children know that you must instruct your children about the power of the eyes upon the soul. And not only that, but all of the senses are like windows into the soul. And so what he says here is that, he says, “But if your eye is bad your whole body will be full of darkness.” So there is a way about our eyes, our vision which is either good or bad. But if our vision is clouded, if there are all kinds of things in the way, then we won't be able to see. Our eyes will be bad.

My mother is getting ready to have cataract surgery next month. With cataracts the lens of the eye becomes cloudy and by God's grace wisdom has been given to doctors to know how to remedy that problem by actually cutting away that cataract that is clouding the eye. Then they repair it by applying a clear lens on top of it. And it is a wonderful illustration of what happens to the transformed heart where when a person is converted and turns to the Lord. Their eyes see things that they never saw before. They see the goodness and beauty of things like never before. I remember that so well when I was first converted. I remember just walking outside and just looking at a leaf was so much more wonderful to me, because I was seeing new eyes. The lamp of my body was my eye.

Jesus is arguing for the purity of eyesight so that we are aware of our eyes, and the things that our eyes love and the things that are our eyes are attracted to. Those things really define who we are. And so this dramatic interplay that affects the soul is what Jesus is speaking about.

What the eyes see the heart loves. What the heart loves, the eyes want. What the eyes want, the will does and what the will does the eyes just wants more of. This is the interplay of the heart and the eyes and the will that Jesus is instructing his disciples.

The disciples of Jesus have to be wise about the way that they are wired. Jesus is giving them a lesson about the way that they have been made and to unify them around this principle of laying up treasures that are in heaven.

The use of the will

“Therefore, no man 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.”

In the same way that he has said there is two kinds of treasure—treasure in heaven and treasure on the earth—and there are two kinds of eyes—there are single eyes, totally dedicated eyes and then there are eyes that are distracted by other things—he now says there are two kinds of masters and he continues this pattern throughout the gospel in different places as well.

Notice the central principle here is exposes the nature of the will. He says that we will hate one master or the other. This is a matter of the will. It is the will that activates the what you intend to do.

Remember that Jesus is speaking to his disciples. And he is speaking to a matter of sanctification, a matter of sanctification in the use of the eyes, the meditations of the heart to help keep them from living in vain.

But this is an issue of disloyalty. He speaks of this in such harsh terms. We need to recognize that, that when we have slipped into building our treasures on the earth, we have actually served the wrong master. This should shock us. Maybe it should shock us more than it does now when we find ourselves slipping into these moments where we are intentionally in our hearts laying up treasures on earth where moth and rust can destroy.

I believe the Lord is trying to terrify his disciples with the truth, to help them understand that there are only two kingdoms in order that they might flee to the only true and eternal kingdom.

Notice the language that he uses. There is the word “serve.” We are doing the business of that one master. And then he uses the term “hating” and “loving.”

No middle ground

And so he is warning his disciples about this terrible reality that is upon us that you cannot mix worldliness with godliness, that they have nothing to do with one another. They have so little to do with one another that if you love one, you are hating the other and vice versa. There just is no middle ground at all. And so Jesus is instructing his disciples about the whole matter of holiness and purity and single mindedness and seeing it with a single heart and single eyes and how this is the thing that he is trying to galvanize his disciples to love him completely and that nothing in the world would get in the way of their love for Him - nothing of their reputation, nothing of their accumulation of wealth, nothing of their appearance, nothing at all, because everything they do is either loving or hating at a given moment.

Far worse than we think

And so all of us when we read this we understand how short we fall in all these matters. It helps us to understand just how depraved we are. We are far worse off than we ever dream that we were because in reality we are either loving or hating God at any given moment in our lives.

And what that means is that our need for salvation is so enormous. Our need is far more than we ever dreamed. Our sins are greater than we thought they were. There is only one way for us to be able to enter into the kingdom of heaven and that is by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who became our righteousness for us, who took all of the punishment for our sins, because they are so great, they are so many, they are so daily. And so here this is the heart of the gospel that no man can serve two masters. He will either love the one or hate the other.

Anxiety tells all

Well, one way you can know if you are laying up treasures in earth or heaven is the way that you respond to the things that happen to you. Your very disposition shows you what kingdom you love the most. And so he says here, "Therefore, I say to you, 'Do not worry about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink or about your body, what you shall put on.' Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"

So, first of all, he says "Therefore." Notice how Jesus is very logical. He is helping his disciples think sequentially about this and now he says, "Therefore, I say to you, 'Do not worry about your life, what you will eat, what you will drink nor about your body what you will put on.'"

And so he is warning them about worry. When we are laying up treasures on the earth, we are worried about our treasures that are on the earth. And he itemizes things about our lives: eating, drinking and clothing. And he says, "You know, life is actually way more than these things, but your heavenly Father has already promised that he would give

those to you. So you should not be worrying about those things. He is a good Father. He has promised to provide them for you already. Why are you worrying about something that he has already devoted himself to giving to you? And, on top of that, your life doesn't even consist of these things anyway, because your life is far more than that. There are treasures in heaven. That is what your life is all about."

Look at the birds of the air

And then he says, "Look at the birds of the air." And he gives an illustration and he gives a number of illustrations along the way between here and the time when he ends his discourse. But he gives the illustration of the birds of the air that neither do they sow nor reap nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. So he talks about birds and how God feeds the birds. But if you have ever watched birds before, you know that they are constantly going about gathering food. They are not laying around waiting for food to show up. They are going after it almost ceaselessly. But at the same time while they are going to gain it, it is their heavenly Father that is feeding them. That is what Jesus is speaking about His sovereign hand in feeding His children. This is not an argument against work. It is actually an illustration how in the midst of our work God feeds us.

The reason

And then he gives the reason why. He says, "Are you not worth much more than they?" So set the birds aside. He feeds the birds. How much more will he feed you, oh you of little faith, as he says later.

Jesus is comforting his disciples so that they don't waste their lives worrying about their daily bread or their clothing, because life is more than that. Plus, they are worth much more than the ones that he is already feeding. He is giving a natural illustration to help them understand.

And then in verse 27 he says, "And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?"

So he is, again, saying, "Worry is such waste anyway, because it doesn't change anything."

Now if there was a worry monitor here... If we could calculate the worries of everyone in this room, I think that we would find lots of worry. When people come in to a congregation like this they come in with many worries and fears. All of us do. And here the Lord Jesus is trying to help us be a different kind of people. Rather than a people worried about food and how God will provide for us, that he would somehow free us from that. He says it is totally useless. You are wasting your life. You are wasting your breath.

You are absolutely wasting your brain, your heart, your will, your breath, your time, everything. So just stop it. That is what Jesus is saying. Why are you worrying? Are you not worth much more than birds that God feeds?

And, plus, it doesn't fix anything. Why? Because he is sovereign, because he causes his rain to fall on the evil and the good. He feeds the just and the unjust and he is perfectly able to take care of you.

How many years has God been taking care of you? You have a track record! He has proven himself like over years. How many minutes have you been alive? He's taken care of you every single minute of your life. Jesus is saying all of these worries are completely useless. They are not worth anything. And they just distract you from laying up treasures in heaven.

I wonder how much treasure in heaven is not there because we have been worrying about food and clothing?

Now, you might say, "Well, I am really not one of these rich people – I have to worry." Well, that may be your perspective. But your perspective is all wrong. For example, two weeks ago the US Census Bureau released a report qualifying its position on poverty. And what they ended up saying was that while they had been claiming that there are 30 million or 40 million people in America who are in a state of poverty, that is actually not true, because all of those people, are living in modern housing, own two VCRs and Xboxes and all kinds of things like that. And they live in a modern kitchen with dishwashers and blenders and refrigerators. They are not living in overcrowded conditions. There is a list of about 50 things that the people who are poverty stricken in America have.

Their basic proposition was, there actually aren't any people in America that fit poverty, at least not the food and clothing kind of poverty that is spoken of here.

I am just going to assume that all of us are enormously wealthy. We are the wealthiest of the world. All you have to do is travel to another country and see it. We are absolutely the most wealthy people on the face of the planet. And at the same time worrying maybe more here than all the other people on the face of the planet. Now what is that all about? Why are we doing that? Why do we keep walking into this church every Sunday with all these worries hanging over our heads?

Well, we don't understand God and His valuation of His children. "Are you not worth much more than they?" We don't understand how valuable we are to Him and how sovereign He really is in our provision. None of our worry changes anything it "cannot add a cubit to our lifespan." You are going to die on the day that God determines for you to die. There is nothing you can do about it. He will take you off the face of this earth the moment he desires it. So you can't add anything to your lifespan.

You might actually think that you can extend your life through healthful living. However, the bottom line is this. When God is ready, I don't care how healthy you are, He is going to take you off this planet. I am not arguing against a healthful life or eating right foods and exercising. That is not the argument I am making. The argument I am making is that all of your worry cannot add anything of value to your life.

Jesus is just continuing to pile on these proofs of this and then he adds another argument in verse 28.

“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow. They neither toil nor spin and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 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 cloth you, oh you of little faith.”

A matter of little faith

He gives this illustration of the lilies of the field. The point is obvious. But at the very end of the sentence he makes a statement that really helps us to understand what the real problem is. Are you ready? Do you see it? “Oh you of little faith.” That is the problem.

We have such a little view of God. We have such an aggrandized view of the things of this world and that is what it means to have little faith. We don't really trust God. The problem really is a matter of faith.

And then in verse 31 he says, “Therefore...” Again, here is another interpretive key as Jesus continues to make his argument and build it out and now finally he is coming down to summarize. “Therefore, do not worry saying, ‘What shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.”

Living like a gentile

So there are these two kinds of dispositions. There is faith and faithlessness, but also notice that he is also casting two other things in contrast. The Gentiles and you, “All these things the Gentiles eagerly seek.” What he is saying is that when you are worrying like this, you are living like a Gentile. You are doing what the Gentiles do. Don't be like the Gentiles. The gentiles are eagerly seeking all these things. But you are different from the Gentiles. You have a different Master. You have a different Father. You have a different Shepherd. You are not a Gentile. You are a precious possession. You are what Paul in Ephesians says his treasure. And He is going to keep his treasure and take it with him to heaven.

So the Gentiles eagerly seek treasure on the earth. How often have you walked into your own house and you have thought like, lived like and worried like the Gentiles? Well, that is a futile way of life. That is a fast way to waste your life. That is what worry is all about. Worry usually happens... is when a dream doesn't come true or we are deprived of something we want or we lose something. Have you lost anything and you are so worried about it?

Well, if you are worried about it, you are just living like the Gentiles and your heart is telling you about your worldliness. Your heart is telling you that your faith is little.

But Jesus says, "Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you."

But this sounds strange because you have been carrying the yoke of the world. And it is a very raspy, uncomfortable yoke. But God says, "No, there is something far better." "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows."

Your father knows

Your heavenly Father knows. Are you conscious of that - even this morning? He knows everything about you. He knows your thoughts before you have them. He knows your steps before you take them. He has hemmed you in behind and before. He has laid his hand upon you. You can't go away from his Spirit. You can't escape it because he knows. Your heavenly Father knows.

This is why Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd leads his sheep. He lays his life down for his sheep." Do you think it is logical at all to worry when you consider that you have a shepherd who has laid his life down for your greatest problem? Is it logical to worry about anything else in this life when you know that he has hung on a cross and taken all the wrath that you deserve? Isn't it logical that he would take care of you? But here it says that he knows. He knows exactly how much money you have. He knows exactly how long your food supply will last. But, unfortunately, we have made such a god out of security that we worry about security and we have no business doing it.

Our whole nation has made a god out of security. The whole insurance industry is based on it. Our whole government is based on the idol of security and so we have been so baptized in this thinking. Our minds have been so washed over and over again by this heretical doctrine of security that we are worried even though we are the absolutely the richest people on the face of the planet. We are still worrying, because we don't really believe that God knows. Our faith is faltering. Here we are together as a church family where our hearts desire so much to be reformed by God. Well, this is another area.

Scripture is sufficient to deal with your worry. And here he is teaching us how to deal with it.

Seek first His Kingdom

And then in verse 33 our Lord brings it all together, "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

What are all these things? All the things that your Father knows you need. That's it. All these things that your Father knows that you need, will be added unto you. And if he deprives you of something, he does it for his own glory, for treasures in heaven, for more happiness this side of heaven. And so seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

And then, finally, the final therefore, “Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow. For tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” You know, David said, “I sought the Lord and he heard me and he delivered me from all of my fears.” Jesus is preparing his disciples to deal with their fears, to deal with their deprivations, to deal with the times when they are hungry and the times when they will finally be martyred. So that they would not be a people who had labored all their lives and laid up treasures on this earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves broke in and steal.

Application:

1. How do you know if you are laying up treasures on earth? We know by examining our hearts and our eyes and our will and our response. Those things are designed to help us discern where our treasure is and where we are laying it up in a given moment.

How contrary this is to our natural impulses. You would think Jesus would give you a list of things to help you evaluate. These are the 10 things that are laying up treasures on earth and heaven. He has already said that you can lay up treasures on earth by praying and fasting and giving. So it is not about being a religious person. It is something far deeper. It goes straight to your heart. It goes to where you are sitting in your seat in the secret place. And you are saying, “Oh, God, help me to see what my treasures are so that I can lay up treasures in heaven.”

We are going to, you know, enter into the celebration of the Lord’s table where we examine ourselves.

We can start laying up treasures in heaven in this very room after we break up today. When we finish our time together as we are gathered as we are now, simply make it your aim to lay up treasures in heaven by making your conversation heavenward, by speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord. Laying up treasures in heaven has to do with the very way that we interact together. When we are gathered and can be together in conversation and relationship, we can be laying up treasures in heaven. What a blessing that is. In other words, we don’t have to be just laying up treasures on the earth. We have an enormous opportunity right here where we are gathered. This is one of the beautiful things about the gathered church. God has always gathered his people together in all times in history. He brings them together really to do basically the same things, to worship and to meditate on his Word and to sharpen one another. We are laying up treasures in heaven when we prayerfully are engaging one another for spiritual good.

It happens every day. You are laying up treasures in heaven when you are teaching your children. You are laying up treasures in heaven around the earth when you are driving in the car. There is not a single square inch of the world in which treasure is not being laid up.

Fasting and giving and praying

We cannot forget the prayings and the fastings and the givings that also lay up treasures in heaven that he has already explained.

The thing that I want us as a church to really grapple with as we are together this morning is: Are we a people who are bent on laying up treasures in heaven or on the earth? And my prayer is that God would help us to discern that individually and that we would be a church that does nothing but lay up treasures in heaven. And this is our heart. This is ought to be the mark of our church. This is what we do when we gather together or apart. This is the aroma of Christ that rises up to heaven as His sons and his daughters are amassing treasure in heaven. We do not want a nice little church and get to the end of it and find that while we prayed and fasted and while we gave our alms and conversed with one another and met together that we were actually laying up treasures on earth and we had nothing left. What a tragedy that is. And yet what a kindness it is of God to show us what it means to waste your life so that you can avoid it and, rather, do something for the kingdom of heaven that will never ever pass away.