

Laying Up Treasure in Heaven

Matthew 6:19-24

King of Kings! (Gospel of Matthew Series)

Prepared by: Matthew S. Black

Sunday, September 1, 2013, 10:30am at Living Hope Church of Roselle, Illinois

“There are no U-Hauls behind hearses.”¹

JOHN PIPER

1. WELCOME VISITORS
2. ANNOUNCE FATHER-SON CAMPOUT FOR TODAY. WE WILL STOP FOR A BITE TO EAT.
3. SIGN UP FOR COUNSELING CONFERENCE. \$150 FOR THREE SATURDAYS. \$275 FOR COUPLES. 20% DISCOUNT. \$120 FOR INDIVIDUALS AND \$220 FOR COUPLES.

Open your Bible to **Matthew 6:19-24**. We are continuing in a series entitled: “King of kings.” This morning we are looking into the second part of a message entitled “Laying Up Treasure in Heaven.” We continue in our study of the Sermon on the Mount.

John Piper rightly said, “There are no U-Hauls behind hearses.” This morning we are exposing the materialism in our lives that robs us of eternal treasures and rewards.

Bertha Adams,

Mrs. Bertha Adams was seventy-one years old when she died alone in West Palm Beach, Florida on Easter Sunday 1976. The coroner’s report read, “Cause of Death ... malnutrition.” After wasting away to fifty pounds she could no longer stay alive. When the state authorities made their preliminary investigation of her home, they found a veritable “pigpen ... the biggest mess you can imagine.” One seasoned inspector declared he had never seen a dwelling in greater disarray. Bertha had begged food at her neighbors’ doors and had gotten what clothes she had from the Salvation Army. From all appearances she was a penniless recluse—a pitiful and forgotten widow. But such was not the case! Amid the jumble of her filthy, disheveled belongings were found two keys to safe-deposit boxes at two different local banks. The discovery was unbelievable. The first box contained over 700 AT&T stock certificates, plus hundreds of other valuable notes, bonds, and solid financial securities, not to mention cash amounting to \$200,000. The second box had no certificates, just cash—\$600,000 to be exact. Bertha Adams was a millionaire and then some! Yet she died of starvation. Her case was even more tragic if she was destitute spiritually.²

Bertha Adams is an extreme parable of Christians and modern materialism. Christians have great spiritual gifts but live in spiritual poverty. Many Christians are wasting away spiritually

¹ John Piper. *Desiring God* (Multnomah), from chapter 7.

² Hughes, R. K. (2001). *The sermon on the mount: the message of the kingdom*. Preaching the Word (p. 205). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

when they could be doing great things for the kingdom. What's the problem? The heart, the eyes, and the will. Our persons are enslaved to materialism.

The Dangers of Materialism

Solomon allowed the love of money and women to ruin his spiritual life. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Lord about money, pretending that they had given the full price of a sale to the church while actually keeping back a portion. They were struck dead. Paul wrote in one of his letters about a young man named Demas, who, he said, "hath forsaken me having loved this present world." We see the same problem today when people put their home and the care of it above the need for biblical teaching and mow the grass on Sunday when they should be at church, or when they direct all their efforts toward amassing a fortune (or part of one) while neglecting their families and the essential spiritual life of their home. No wonder that Paul wrote to Timothy to remind him that "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Tim. 6:10).

Remember that the Bible nowhere teaches that money itself is evil. It is not money or possessions that are at fault; it is the men who use them. Before God created men and women he created a vast world of pleasant and useful things for them. They were meant for man's use in every joyful and constructive way. But when man sinned, the things that were to be helpful to him came to usurp a place in his heart which they were never meant to have. Soon men began to fight and steal and cheat and do countless other things to possess them. Today, when a man surrenders to God and allows him to redirect his life, a process begins in which money and things are removed from the center and God once again is reinstated on the throne.³

Reading of Holy Scripture

Matthew 6:19–24, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, 23 but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

24 "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

Outline

This morning three things in this text that grab our attention. We're going to see:

1. Our treasure reveals our **heart**.
2. Our treasure reveals our **vision** – an uncluttered / generous vision reveals a godly heart.
3. Our treasure reveals our **master** – allegiance, mastery, slavery

I. Our Treasure reveals our **Heart (6:19-21).**

Matthew 6:19–21, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

³ Boice, J. M. (2002). *The Sermon on the Mount: an expositional commentary* (pp. 213–214). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Stop “Treasuring Up”

Lay up (*thēsauroizō*) is the word for *thesaurus*, and it means positively – “to treasure”⁴ or negatively – “to hoard.” The Greek also carries the connotation of “stacking or laying out horizontally, as one stacks coins.”⁵ Don’t treasure up things on this earth. It has the idea of **hoarding** or **stockpiling** of wealth that is not being used. Is our heart aimed toward heaven or towards earth? Jesus says stop treasuring up things on earth.

Set Your Affections on Things Above

Colossians 3:1–3, “If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your affections on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

Stop hoarding your earthly treasure if you have it. Later in this chapter he’s going to say “stop worrying about not having treasure” if you don’t have it.

Garments, Grain and Gold

Why do we need to make this choice to STOP hoarding? Because earth is the place, Jesus says, “where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal” (vs. 19b). Jesus uses three words that describe the earthly treasures in his day: “moths” eat **garments**, “rust” or literally “the eating” or feasting of rodents on your food and **grain**, and “thieves” who steal our **gold**. So we have three commodities that people used to trade with in the ancient times of Jesus day and before. You had **garments, grain, and gold**.

Garments

“where **moth** and rust destroy” (vs. 19b)

Gehazi’s Greed (2 Kings 5:15-27). Gehazi the servant of Elisha wished to make some forbidden profit out of Naaman's cured leprosy, and so he asked for a talent of silver and **two changes of garments** because that was substantial wealth.

Achan’s Greed (Joshua 7). You remember Achan. He coveted gold and a Babylonian garment. Again, this was a sign of wealth.

Benjamin’s Garments (Gen. 45:22). In a positive way, remember Joseph wanted to show affection to his brother Benjamin by his mother Rachel, and he gave him **five extra changes of garments**. More wealth!

Samson’s Riddle (Judges 14:12). Samson said, if you can answer the riddle within 7 days, and “find it out, then I will give you **thirty linen garments** and **thirty changes of clothes**.” This was fantastic wealth!

So garments were a sign of wealth and prosperity. But remember, Jesus says, moths eat clothing! But moth’s only eat clothing you are collecting. Any clothing you are wearing does not get eaten by moths!

⁴ Balz, H. R., & Schneider, G. (1990–). *Exegetical dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans.

⁵ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (p. 409). Chicago: Moody Press.

Grain

“where moth and rust destroy” (vs. 19b)

The word “rust” is translated this way **only here** in the New Testament. Everywhere else it is translated in regard to eating or food.⁶ In light of this, the NIV (2011) gives a much better translation: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy ...” So the idea of “rust” is really rodents or vermin. Rodents and roaches destroy your food!

The Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21). Do you remember the rich fool said, “I will tear down my barns and build...” what? “Bigger barns,” to hold more of my wealth. And this rich man’s wealth was in grain (Luke 12:18).

The Problem with Grain

You know what the problem with grain is? Mice, rats, worms, vermin, they eat it. 50% of all of the stored grain of India is eaten by rats and mice, even today.⁷

Roaches in Louisiana

I used to live in Louisiana. We had lots of strange critters down there. We had alligators and crawfish. You all call them “crayfish”. I love Louisiana – where else can you have red beans and rice, jambalaya, and gumbo? I’ll tell you what though – there’s nothing worse than roaches or bugs in your food. That’s what Jesus is saying. Food, or grain was an important commodity in Jesus’ day.

Gold

“where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal” (vs. 19b).

Digging Through a Wall or Field

The third commodity Jesus speaks of is gold or really any treasure you could bury or stockpile. The phrase “break in” is literally “dig through” or “dig up;” and could refer to **digging through** the mud walls of a house or **digging up** the dirt in a field.⁸ Almost any kind of wealth, of course, is subject to **thieves**, which is why many people buried their nonperishable valuables in the ground away from the house, often in a field (see Matt. 13:44).

Gold is something you can stockpile, but it may be stolen, and one day, you’re going to have to give it all up!

The Problem: We Worship Earthly Things

The human heart cannot help but to treasure and to worship something! “When Christians commit sin, they do not cease worshiping. Rather, their worship is directed away from the Creator and toward created things.”⁹

⁶ *Brōsis* (**rust**) literally means “an eating,” and is translated with that meaning everywhere in the New Testament but here (see Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 8:4, “eating”; 2 Cor. 9:10, “food”; and Heb. 12:16, “meal”).

⁷ “India’s Poor Urged to Eat Rats.” Published by BBC News at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7557107.stm>, Wednesday, 13 August 2008.

⁸ MacArthur, 411.

⁹ Quote from Mars Hill ministries blog article, “How Does Worship Transform Us?”

The Heart: An Idol Making Factory

Because of that, John Calvin said, that “the human heart is an idol making factory.”¹⁰ The heart worships it’s way into addictions that it was not made for. We were not made to be slaves of money or materialism, but many of us are. How do we get out? How do we stop the treasuring up of stuff?

By laying up treasure in heaven! Vs. 20, “lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven”. Moths and rodents don’t eat your clothes and spoil your food!

The Secret to Laying Up Treasure in Heaven :The Heart

Matthew 6:21, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” If you want your treasure to change, you have to change your heart. Ezekiel 36:26 speaks of how this can take place. God says, “I will give you a new heart, and a new Spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” We must come to God in total surrender and humility.

The Explosive Power of a New Affection

The Puritan preacher Thomas Chalmers, in his sermon “*The Expulsive Power of a New Affection*,” said that desires for God and desires for sin cannot coexist in the human heart. They are two opposing “affections”—one will always push out the other. So, he said, “the only way to dispossess [the heart] of an old affection, is by the explosive power of a new one” (see Gal. 5:16-17).¹¹ You can’t just “stop it,” because it is always more than behavior. It is always rooted in your affections, in what you love—what you worship. Chalmers points the way forward: we worshipped our way into this mess, and by God’s grace, we’ll worship our way out.”¹²

We worshipped our way into materialism because we wanted stuff more than anything else. We must worship our way out.

How Do We Lay Up Treasure in Heaven?

Selling Extra Possessions for Your Forever Family: In the book of Acts, we see that the people “had all things in common” (Acts 2:41-45). They sold the extra possessions they had. That’s what Luke records in **Acts 2:45**, “they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.”

When thousands of people, mostly Jews, were won to Christ during and soon after Pentecost, the Jerusalem church was flooded with many converts who had come from distant lands and who decided to stay on in the city. Many of them no doubt were poor, and many others probably left most of their wealth and possessions in their homelands. To meet the great financial burden suddenly placed on the church, local believers “began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need” (Acts 2:45).

The Diocletian Persecution

Many years later, during one of the many Roman persecutions (the Diocletian persecution), soldiers broke into a certain church to confiscate its presumed treasures. An elder is said to have

¹⁰ John Calvin. *Institutes of the Christian Religion, Volume 1* (London: T. & T. Clark, 1863), 53 (paraphrased).

¹¹ Thomas Chalmers. *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection* (Curiosmith, 2012). Also available on Amazon Kindle.

¹² Mike Wilkerson. *Redemption* (Crossway: Wheaton, 2011), 38.

pointed to a group of widows and orphans who were being fed and said, “There are the treasures of the church.”¹³

How Do We Lay Up Treasure in Heaven?

We use our Time and our Resources to further the Mission of Christ.

Take Part in Christ’s Mission: Jesus tells us how to spend our lives in Matthew 28:18–20, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Serve Other Christians: Paul said in **2 Corinthians 12:15**, “I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls.” **Rom. 12:13**, Paul simply says, “Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”

Give Your Time to the Church and Fellowship: This is the place where you grow. It’s where God changes you. It’s where iron sharpens iron through our worship, our service, the teaching of the Word. In Acts 2:41-45 we have how the people spent their time: with each other. Be present each time the church meets. Be at each others’ homes. We ought to know each other, spend time together. Not every service is for you, but come and support your brother and sisters. Don’t treat Christ’s Bride with disdain. Come and enjoy the fellowship with Christ’s bride.

What Did Jesus Say?

Randy Alcorn reckons that “15 percent of everything Christ said relates to this topic – more than his teachings on heaven and hell combined.”¹⁴

Rich Young Ruler: “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).

Woe to the Rich: “Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven . . . Woe to you rich, for you have received your consolation” (Luke 6:20).

Renounce Everything: “Whoever does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33).

Possessions Don’t Define Who You Really Are: “A person’s life does not consist in the possessions that he has” (Luke 12:15).

Seek First the Kingdom: Jesus has the perfect summary of this point later in the chapter: “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).

This is no where near all that Jesus said. This is just a small treatment. The idea is not that wealth is wrong, but that it should be invested into the kingdom.

Perhaps you say, I have mine in the bank or stock market – it’s safe. We all know that moth and vermin corrupt it and thieves break through and steal! Nothing is safe unless it is laid up in heaven.

¹³ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (pp. 412–413). Chicago: Moody Press.

¹⁴ *The Treasure Principle*, Multnomah, 2001, p. 8).

You can't bring your treasure with you, but you can send it on ahead! Remember that what we keep we lose and what we invest with God we gain eternally. Jim Elliot said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep **to gain** that which **he cannot lose**."

How Do We do That?

2 Corinthians 9:6, "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."

Luke 6:38, "Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap..." In other words it's all compacted and squished in and squashed down and pressed together, so that it's packed and running over. Then Jesus says, "For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

Proverbs 11:24, "One scatters, yet increases; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want." We ought to be sowing ourselves widely and scattering ourselves like seed for the Kingdom.

What is this treasure? 1 Peter 1:4, Peter calls it "an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you."

1 Timothy 6:17–19, "As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. 18 They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be **generous and ready to share**, 19 thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life." The call of God upon our lives regarding our luxuries and our wealth is that we distribute and we share as opposed to hoarding it, stockpiling it.

Your Treasure Reveals Your Heart!

Matthew 6:21, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." The heart of the matter is the matter of the heart. What do you love? Your treasure will reveal what you love. Are you stockpiling for earth or spending and being spent for heaven?

Is your heart Kingdom focused? What about your vision?

II. Our Treasure reveals our Vision (6:22-23).

Jesus moves from the heart to the eyes. Matthew 6:22-23, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, 23 but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!"

The Picture: Body Like a House

The picture here is familiar. The Body is like a house, and your eyes are like windows. The windows are made to light up the house and determine what you should do. In the same way, how we see affects what we do with our whole person: heart, mind, body and soul.

William Barclay writes of these verses: “The idea behind this passage is one of childlike simplicity. The eye is regarded as the window by which the light gets into the whole body. The color and state of a window decide what light gets into a room. If the window is clear, clean, and undistorted, the light will come flooding into the room, and will illuminate every corner of it. If the glass of the window is colored or frosted, distorted, dirty, or obscure, the light will be hindered, and the room will not be lit up.”¹⁵

The Principle: Blind People Stockpile on Earth

The principle is simple and sobering: the way we look at and use our money is a sure barometer of our spiritual condition. The reality is that people are blind and don't see the need and stockpile treasures on earth because of their blindness.

The heart is the eye of the soul, through which the illumination of every spiritual experience shines. It is through our hearts that God's truth, love, peace, and every other spiritual blessing comes to us. When our hearts, our spiritual **eyes**, are **clear**, then our **whole body will be full of light**.¹⁶

Haplous (**clear**) can also mean single, as it is translated in the King James Version. An **eye** that is **clear** represents a heart that has single-minded devotion. It means: single, pure, sound, healthy, clear seeing.

Bishop John Charles Ryle said, “Singleness of purpose is one great secret of spiritual prosperity.”¹⁷

Clear Vision: Lift Up Your Eyes!

Haplous (**clear**) can also mean single. We need a clear and single vision of Christ.

What you look at your will follow. You will always become what you worship. Remember what Paul said: “Demas has forsaken me having loved this present world.” Or what about Lot's wife – Remember her! She looked back at Sodom and became a worthless pillar of salt.

An Evil or Bad Eye

Loving Earthly Treasures will CLUTTER our spiritual eye sight. Earthly wealth is not bad, but if our hearts love it, then our hearts are cluttered.

If our **eye is bad**, however, if it is diseased or damaged, no light can enter, and the **whole body will be full of darkness**. If our hearts are encumbered with material concerns they become “blind” and insensitive to spiritual concerns. The eye is like a window which, when **clear**, allows light to shine through, but, when dirty, or **bad**, prevents light from entering.

Bad or Selfish, Stingy Eye

Ponēros (**bad**) usually means evil, as it is translated here in the King James Version. In the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) it is often used in translating the Hebrew expression “evil eye,” a Jewish colloquialism that means grudging, or stingy (see Deut. 15:9, “hostile”; Prov. 23:6, “selfish”). “A man with an evil eye,” for example, is one who “hastens after wealth” (Prov. 28:22).¹⁸

¹⁵ Boice, J. M. (2002). *The Sermon on the Mount: an expositional commentary* (p. 216). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

¹⁶ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (pp. 413–414). Chicago: Moody Press.

¹⁷ *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. Matthew* [London: James Clarke, 1965], p. 56

¹⁸ MacArthur, 414.

Selfish Indulgence

The **eye** that is **bad** is the heart that is selfishly indulgent. The person who is materialistic and greedy is spiritually blind. Because he has no way of recognizing true light, he thinks he has light when he does not. What is thought to be **light** is therefore really **darkness**, and because of the self-deception, **how great is the darkness!**¹⁹

The Greatest Darkness

The greatest darkness there is will be found in the self deceived. **Mat. 6:23**, “if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!” The light refers to the idea of God’s light – knowing God.

Those who “have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof” are in the greatest darkness.

Hidden Treasure

Christ says that those in the Kingdom of Heaven can see treasure others cannot see. Matthew 13:44, “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”

The child of God sees Christ and the Gospel as priceless. Knowing Christ is the greatest treasure. Like the old Gospel hymn: Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus! You can have all this world, but give me Jesus!

Do you have a single eye and a single devotion to Christ?

Simply Gazing at the Beauty of Christ!

Lift up your eyes with child like simplicity to the Savior. Philippians 3:8-10, “Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”

Have you counted all things as dung, because you’ve seen the excellent beauty of Christ?

III. Our Treasure reveals our **Master** (6:24).

Matthew 6:24, “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

The third thing our treasure reveals is our allegiance. Who or what is our **masters**? Just as we cannot have our treasures both in earth and in heaven or our bodies both in light and in darkness, we cannot **serve two masters**.

Slave Owners

Kurios (**masters**) is often translated lord, and refers to a slave owner. The idea is not simply that of an employer, of which a person may have several at the same time and work for each of them satisfactorily. Many people today hold two or more jobs. If they work the number of hours

¹⁹ Ibid.

they are supposed to and perform their work as expected, they have fulfilled their obligation to their employers, no matter how many they may have. The idea is of **masters** of slaves.

A Slave: Total Allegiance

But by definition, a slave owner has total control of the slave. For a slave there is no such thing as partial or part-time obligation to his master. He owes fulltime time service to a full-time master. He is owned and totally controlled by and obligated to his master. He has nothing left for anyone else. To give anything to anyone else would make his master less than master. It is not simply difficult, but absolutely impossible, to **serve two masters** and fully or faithfully be the obedient slave of each.²⁰

Slave of Riches: Bernie Madoff

If you want to understand the brutal nature of slavery to riches, consider the story of Bernie Madoff. Bernie Madoff is known as “the greatest con man of all time”. According to his own testimony, since 1991 he stole more than 64 Billion (with a B) dollars from very rich Wall Street investors. A billion is one thousand million dollars. He did that 64 times! He took it, and never invested any of it. He deposited it into a Chase Manhattan bank account and paid out huge dividends as if it were invested. He would give these astronomical dividend checks out, and his investors told him to keep it and reinvest because it was so out of this world. It was also all a lie.

When asked what it was like living a lie he said, “**It was a nightmare for me. I wish they caught me... years ago**”. According to him living a lie was a “constant, nagging anxiety”—every day waiting to see if he would get caught.²¹

And the shame was so great that his wife cut off all communication with the media saying she was “embarrassed” beyond words. His son committed suicide on the 2nd anniversary of his dad’s imprisonment.

What a nightmare! Sin is slavery! God sent His own Son to give you another benevolent Master!

Bondslave of Jesus

Throughout the NT Paul refers to himself as a bondslave of Jesus. It indicates his total devotion to Christ. James says, “A double minded man is unstable in all his ways”.

You can’t serve both God and money.

1 Kings 18:21, “And Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.” And the people did not answer him a word.”

Baal in the ancient near east was the god of “rain, thunder, fertility and agriculture.” He was the god of prosperity. He was the “mammon” god of the ancient world.

Revelation 3:15–16, Jesus says to the Laodocian Christians: “‘I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! 16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.’”

Ancient Christian Creed

²⁰ MacArthur, 414-15.

²¹ “Bernie Madoff: Free At Last”. New York Magazine. <http://nymag.com/news/crimelaw/66468/> Accessed 26 February 2011.

The most ancient and simplest Christian creed is: Jesus Christ is Lord. Is He your Master? Where is your treasure? Have you dedicated your life completely to Him?

Caleb said, in **Joshua 14:8**, "I wholly followed the LORD my God."

John Calvin said this, "Where riches hold the dominion of the heart God has lost His authority."

David said in **Psalms 16:8**, "I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken."

Conclusion

What do you treasure? What do you love? Where is your affection? Who or what masters you?

Seeing the Stars in the Middle of the Day

Have you ever seen the stars in the middle of the day? Of course not, but they're there. They don't go away. The reason you can't see them is because of the brightness of the sun. So it ought to be with Christians. Are there many treasures on earth? Yes. But I don't see them as the world sees them. They are temporary and ultimately worthless unless they are invested in the Kingdom of Heaven. Why am I so blind to the world's treasures and pleasure and allurements? Because like the sun outshines the stars, Jesus far outshines all the treasures of this world.

John Wesley and Six Silver Spoons

Leonard Ravenhill speaks of the legacy of John Wesley. Wesley was saved at 35, preached for 53 years. What did he leave when he died? He left a handful of books, a faded Geneva gown that he preached in all over England, six silver spoons somebody gave him, six pound notes, "give one to each of the poor men that carry me to my grave."

He could have died as rich as your famous TV preacher Sunday. He made a tremendous amount of money, and he built orphanages. He made money, and he printed bibles. He compiled, with Charles, the Methodist hymnbook. And he died worth about thirty dollars.

He printed Bibles. He printed hymnbooks. He financed missionaries to go across the earth. That's the way to use your money. You think of the reward. Why do you think it says don't lay up treasure on earth? Lay up treasure in heaven.