

# Dumping the Treasury

## Righteousness and Possessions Part 2

Matthew 6:19-21 1-30-11

How do we obey the command not to store up treasure on earth when we need to earn a living, provide for our families, save for future bills and for our children, etc? This message gives specific instruction on what it means to use money without treasuring it. Be sure to listen to the Q&A at the end for the shopping cart illustration.

Excerpt:

Seven indicators I found in Scripture that alert us that something has found its way into our treasury (from the message titled "Recreation" on March 6, 2009).

- 1) When you are not content without it (1 Tim.6:8-9).
- 2) When the price you pay for the pleasure outweighs the spiritual benefit (Pr.23:29-35).
- 3) When it enslaves you (Tit.3:3).
- 4) When your hope is in that thing rather than God (1 Tim.5:5, 6:17).
- 5) When you prefer that thing above what God promises (Heb.11:25).
- 6) When it chokes the work of the Word in your heart (Lk.8:14).
- 7) When it impels selfishness rather than love (Jas.4:1).

Any time one or more of those seven things begins to happen you know something has found its way into your earthly treasury.

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**Matthew 6:19-24** 19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, 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. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! 24 "No one can serve two masters. 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 both God and Money.

## **Introduction: We need security**

God did not design us to live with an unsecured treasure. I once heard of an orphanage in World War II where the children were all having health problems because they could not sleep. They tried everything to help the kids sleep and finally realized that these kids had spent so much of their lives hungry that even though there was plenty of food for them in the orphanage, they were still worried all the time. So they decided to put a piece of bread in each child's hand each night when they went to bed, and the kids all began to sleep through the night. We are all like those kids. We are designed by God to need a sense that what we are going to need in the future is secure. There are all kinds of uncertainties we can live with – but one uncertainty God did not intend for us to live with is the uncertainty of our treasure being at risk.

Your treasure is that which you cannot afford to lose. And when your treasure is at risk your life fills up with worry, anxiety, and fear. Usually when a Christian struggles with fear and worry we assume it is because they do not have enough faith. But that is not always the case. It may well be that the problem is that their treasure is all earthly and therefore vulnerable. You cannot trust God to protect your earthly treasure because He never promised to protect that. So if your treasure is on earth then it makes sense to worry and fret and fear because it really is at risk of being lost. Life is tedious when your treasure is on earth. Your spouse could leave you and take all your treasure away. A judge, with one pound of his gavel, could take it away. A fire could take it. An accident could take it. If your treasure is someone's approval, a mere misunderstanding could take away your treasure. Unforeseen circumstances could take away your earthly treasure. So in Matthew 6:20 Jesus commands us to place our treasure in a secure location.

## **Empty your Earthly Treasury**

We are studying through the Sermon on the Mount and we came last week to verse 19 of chapter 6 where Jesus begins speaking about what righteousness looks like when dealing with money and possessions. So this is part 2 of last week's sermon. And I have two goals for today's sermon: 1) that each of us would empty out our earthly treasury, and 2) that we would fill up our heavenly treasury.

### **Matthew 6:19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth**

Jesus commands that we do not fill up our earthly treasury, so whatever we have put in there should not be in there and needs to be dumped out. There should be *nothing* whatsoever in there. So I am calling you this morning to get rid of every last dime out of your earthly treasury.

### **20 Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven**

So point 1 – we need to empty our earthly treasury, and point 2 – we need to fill up our heavenly treasury.

### **Your treasury: What you treasure**

Now, when I say we must empty our earthly treasury I do not mean by that that you have to get rid of all your possessions. We found last week that we are to earn a living, provide for our families, save for our children, prepare for the future, and even enjoy the financial blessings God has given us. So it is OK for us to own things. Just because you own something does not mean you treasure that thing. Some of the things you own might be in your treasury, and other things that you own are not in your treasury. Not only that, but there may be a whole bunch of things that are in your treasury that you do not own. There are poor people who have millions of dollars in their treasury. And there are millionaires who do not have one dime in their treasury. Your treasury consists of all those things you

treasure. All the things your heart loves – the things your soul looks for joy and satisfaction, all the things you work hardest to get – or to keep (the things you fear losing the most). They are the things that must be secure in order for you to sleep at night. Your treasure is that which you cannot afford to lose.

And not everything in your earthly treasure is physical. It might be your reputation or someone's approval, it might be a relationship. There are single people who have a future husband or wife in their treasure. There are married men who have their neighbor's wife in their treasure. Your earthly treasure is made up of all those things you treasure – whether you own them or not.

So emptying your treasure does not necessarily mean getting rid of all your stuff. It just means taking all your stuff out of your treasury and putting it into your other account. You see, we have our treasury, which is like a savings account, and we have another account that is all working capital that we use to carry out our calling in this life. So do not get rid of everything. Keep the stuff you can use for the kingdom. Just make sure there is nothing in your treasury.

“How do I know when something has leaked its way inside my treasury?”

Very often we acquire some earthly thing and in the beginning we have it for kingdom purposes, but over time it somehow migrates from our kingdom working capital account over into our treasury. How do you know when that has happened?

Is it when I use some resource for my own earthly enjoyment? No, not necessarily. God very often expresses His love for us in the form of physical blessings, and He wants us to enjoy those blessings.

**1 Timothy 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.**

When you give someone a gift you want them to enjoy that gift. There is a place for leisure and recreation and enjoyment of earthly pleasures – just as long as they do not find their way into your earthly treasury. As I said, God wants us to enjoy the wealth and earthly comforts He has given us. They serve the purpose of enabling us to have a fuller understanding of His goodness and kindness and what it is like to be in His presence. And that is a kingdom purpose. Leisure, recreation, enjoyment of earthly pleasures – that can be kingdom work if you enjoy those things as part of your fellowship with God. Increasing your love for God and enjoying His love is as much of a kingdom purpose as anything.

So if that is the case, what is to keep us from becoming hedonists and living for earthly pleasure? What is to keep us from just saying, “I’m enjoying God’s love” and plunging headlong into luxury and self-indulgence? How do you know when you have crossed the line from enjoying God through His gifts to putting those gifts into your earthly treasury? Or to use Paul’s words, how do you know when you have become like the people in 2 Timothy 3:4 who are **lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God**? Or to use John’s words, how do you know when you are loving the world and the things in the world (1 Jn.2:15)?

I did a whole message on that question on March 6, 2009 titled “Recreation.” You can find it in Special Messages on FoodForYourSoul.net.<sup>1</sup> I also talked about this issue quite a bit in our study of Matthew 6:11 – the sermon titled “Our Daily Bread.”<sup>2</sup> So if you want a full study of that I would refer you to those two sermons. For now I will just remind you of the seven indicators I found in Scripture that alert us that something has found its way into our treasury.

1) When you are not content without it (1 Tim.6:8-9).

2) When the price you pay for the pleasure outweighs the spiritual benefit (Pr.23:29-35).

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<sup>1</sup> [http://foodforyoursoul.net/ffys\\_v2/?page\\_id=37&series=40](http://foodforyoursoul.net/ffys_v2/?page_id=37&series=40)

<sup>2</sup> [http://foodforyoursoul.net/ffys\\_v2/?page\\_id=37&book\\_key=40&chapter=6](http://foodforyoursoul.net/ffys_v2/?page_id=37&book_key=40&chapter=6)

- 3) When it enslaves you (Tit.3:3).
- 4) When your hope is in that thing rather than God (1 Tim.5:5, 6:17).
- 5) When you prefer that thing above what God promises (Heb.11:25).
- 6) When it chokes the work of the Word in your heart (Lk.8:14).
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Any time one or more of those seven things begins to happen you know something has found its way into your earthly treasury.

### **Selfishness**

And that seventh principle is the one Jesus focuses on the most whenever He talks about treasure. In fact I will show you next time that that is what Jesus is getting at in the next section with the good eye and bad eye. That is all about selfishness vs. generosity. When you treasure heavenly things it makes you generous. But when you treasure earthly things (another word for that is coveting, or greed), it pushes you toward selfishness. And when that happens you will find that there is a lot of anger in your life.

### **James 4:1 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?**

The more our earthly treasury fills up, the more irritable we tend to become because people are always messing with our treasure. We have a lot of worry and anxiety and fear because it might get messed up or taken away, and when it does get messed up or taken away we get angry. When your treasure is in heaven you are not irritable because no one can touch it, no one can hinder your access to it, no one can ruin it, spill anything on it or mess it up in any way, and so not only do fear and anxiety go away, so does selfish anger. So seeking heavenly treasure leads to generosity, but seeking earthly treasure leads to selfishness and anger and fear and anxiety and worry and discontentment. And it distracts you from God rather than increasing your desire for Him.

### **How is that not selfishness?**

Now, before we go any further I need to explain something that I know is a problem for a lot of people. Someone might ask at this point, "If the mark of storing up for yourself earthly treasure is selfishness, why is the solution to store up for yourself treasure in heaven?" You might have expected Jesus would say, "Don't store up *for yourself* treasure on earth; instead store up treasure *for others*." But He does not say that. The solution to storing up for yourself on earth is storing up for yourself in heaven. So how is that not selfishness? If my motive is to accumulate reward for myself and to act in my own self-interest – how is that not selfish?

### **Required**

There are some people who are convinced that seeking heavenly treasure is selfish. They say, "I'm above that. I do what's right simply for God's benefit – whether I get anything out of it or not. I am not seeking any benefit for myself." If that is you – if you want to do what is right but for some other motive than reward, too bad. You are out of luck. You do not have that option. Jesus never gave you the option of dismissing this as a motive. This is a command – **treasure up for yourselves treasure in heaven**. If you do not treasure up for yourself treasure in heaven – if you fail to stockpile rewards for yourself, you are disobeying Christ. (And you will get your wish – you will not get any reward, but Christ will not be pleased with you.) It is immoral not to be motivated by heavenly reward.

Now, the last time I preached on reward we lost some folks from the church. One person who left debated this with me, and his argument was that all Jesus is saying in this chapter is that God gives reward. He is just informing us that God gives it, but in no way is He implying that the promise of

reward should motivate us. Could that be true? Is it possible that Jesus mentions reward in this chapter over and over and over just as a piece of information that is to have no impact at all on our desires or motivations? Our hearts should be unmoved and unaffected by God's promises of reward, and they should not have enough value in our hearts to move us to action? No, we know that is not possible because of verse 21. The reason we are to treasure up treasure in heaven is because where your treasure is there your heart will be also. God wants us to not only accumulate reward in heaven, but He wants that accumulation of reward to have a tug on our hearts. He wants it to have a strong, gravitational pull on our affections and will and desires and attitudes and thoughts and motives. The people who say that all the talk of reward is meant to just inform us but not motivate us miss the logical connection between verse 20 and verse 21. Our treasure is to be there so that our hearts will be there.

***There is never a difference between what is most righteous and what is best for you***

So we must not only do that which gets us heavenly reward but we must have that as our motive. So how is that not selfishness? To answer that we need to understand the difference between selfishness and self-interest. If I went to a conference for a week and I called the power company and told them to turn off the heat in my house because I want to save money – so my family is freezing the whole time I am gone, then when I get back I have it turned back on so I will be comfortable, I think we can all agree that would be selfish. However, no one has ever accused me of being selfish for having the heat turned on in our house when everyone is home – even though I benefit from that heat. Selfishness is not when you do something that is in your best interests. Selfishness is when you place your own desires ahead of other people's highest interests. If I am driving with my family and I swerve to avoid an accident, that is not selfishness even though I benefit from avoiding the accident. But if the accident is unavoidable and I swerve in such a way that my family takes the brunt of the collision instead of me – that would be selfish. You see, selfishness happens when there is a conflict between my own desires and the best interests of others, and I chose my comfort over their best interests. But when their best interests and my desires are one and the same, it is not selfish to do that thing.

As a side note – this is why it is not selfish for God to magnify His own glory and command people to worship Him. That is not selfish for Him to do that because magnifying His glory is also in our best interests. There is never a conflict between what most honors God and what is best for us. It would be selfish if I pointed people to my own glory, because that is not in anyone's best interests. But since the most loving thing God can do for us is let us see His glory and worship Him, then there is nothing selfish about Him doing that.

And in the same way, there is never any conflict between that which brings me heavenly reward, and that which is most godly and righteous. And so acquiring heavenly reward is never selfish. It would be selfish for me to seek reward if doing so would take away from someone else, or hurt someone, or diminish God's glory, or anything like that. But the amazing truth of Scripture is that God has designed His kingdom such that that is never the case! Very often seeking money can be at someone else's expense. There are times when seeking my own comfort can be at someone else's expense. But never is there a time when acquiring heavenly reward is at someone else's expense. Anything I ever do that gains heavenly reward will always benefit other people because the only way to get heavenly reward is to place their needs ahead of my own comfort. So there is never a time when I have to choose, "Should I do what's ultimately in my own best interests or do that which honors God the most or do that which is best for people?" All three are always exactly the same thing!

And here is another thing to consider: If it were selfish to do what is in your own best interests even when that is also what glorifies God the most, then it would be immoral to ever enjoy anything good. If I said, "Oh, I love worship – I love hearing the name of Christ magnified" then someone would say, "Selfish – you're just worshipping Him because you love it. You're getting what you want." If someone says, "I love giving to the poor" suddenly his giving would be selfishness. So then the only way to ever do a truly good thing would be to not desire that good thing, which means the

person who loves murder and killing and stealing could be called a good person if he refrained from those things, but the person who loved giving and serving and showing kindness would be considered evil because he is just doing the things he wants to do and being selfish. And that is the opposite of what Scripture says. The Bible says a godly man is someone who loves the good and hates what is evil.

### **Why is desire for reward a moral issue?**

So it is not selfish to be motivated by heavenly treasure for yourself. In fact, as I said earlier, it is immoral not to be motivated by it.

### ***It is a matter of faith***

If God says, “Do this and I will give you a reward in heaven” and that promise of reward does not increase our desire to do what He says, that is proof of a malfunctioning, sinful heart because it dishonors God. If your wife said, “Hey, come into the bedroom and I will make you glad you did” and you say, “Pffft – yeah right,” or you say, “OK, I’ll come into the bedroom but it’s NOT because I want to – it’s purely for your sake” – that dishonors your wife. It shows her to be undesirable in your eyes. If God promises a great reward and it has no impact on our affections, and we say, “I’ll do it God, but not because I desire what You are offering,” it shows God to be undesirable in our eyes. It is a lack of faith – pure and simple. When the writer of Hebrews wanted to illustrate what mature faith looks like, he pointed us to Moses – who did what he did for reward.

**Hebrews 11:25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.**

Being motivated by reward is an act of faith because if God says something is supremely valuable, and your heart says, “It’s not valuable enough to motivate me to action” – obviously you do not believe Him. You do not trust Him. So it dishonors God because it is a lack of faith.

### ***Righteousness is measured by desires***

Secondly, it reveals an evil heart. Preferring earthly treasure is irreverent and profane.

**Hebrews 12:16 See that no one is ... profane like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son.**

When you care more about earthly comfort than about spiritual treasures, that is profane. You can tell how righteous a person is by what they treasure. If you love what is evil, you are evil. And if you love what is good, you are righteous. So this is a moral issue because a soul that treasures non-treasure is messed up. And a soul that does not appreciate true treasure is messed up. If you look at the greatest beauty and it is not beautiful to you, something is wrong with you. If you have no desire for that which God says is good, that is perversion. And God says heavenly reward is an exceedingly precious treasure. So if I do not treasure it, do not desire it, am not motivated by it, then I have a messed up heart.

### ***Pride***

So failure to be motivated by heavenly reward is a moral issue because it is a lack of faith, it is a sign of perverted affections, and third – failure to be motivated by divine reward is a mark of pride. When you say, “I do good for God’s benefit, not for my own benefit” that shows an incredibly low view of God and high view of self. People who say that actually think they are in a position to offer

God something that benefits Him. Nothing we do benefits God. Every good deed we ever do borrows more grace from God. So if you are doing good things for God's benefit rather than your benefit then you are the generous benefactor and God is the needy beneficiary and that is backwards.

## Fill your Heavenly Treasury

So point 1 of this sermon – empty everything out of your earthly treasury. There should be nothing in there – no money, no relationship, no job, no possessions, not your health or any of your stuff or any of your neighbor's stuff – nothing. Now point 2 – fill up your treasury in heaven. And filling up your heavenly treasury is a two-part process. The first part is to put treasure there. And the way to put treasure in the heavenly treasury is by doing things that please God. We found back at the beginning of the chapter that everything you ever do that pleases God will be rewarded. So all righteousness will be rewarded, but there is one thing in particular that Jesus tends to zero in on whenever He talks about stockpiling reward in heaven – and that is giving.

### Put things there

**Luke 12:33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.**

**Luke 14:13 when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, <sup>14</sup> and ... you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.**

If our enjoyment of earthly things is really an act of fellowship with God then it will cause us to want more fellowship with God. And if you want more fellowship with God you will want to do the kinds of things God really cares about, which always involves generous giving. So if we have a choice between enjoying an earthly thing or giving that thing up in order to accumulate a much greater heavenly reward, we will joyfully give it up. The greatest enjoyment of earthly wealth comes in giving, because it really is more blessed to give than to receive. Matthew Henry said wealth is like manure. It is not good for anything unless you spread it around. Gather it into a pile and all you have is a pile of manure.

### Treasure it

So, how do you treasure up treasure in heaven? You have to put treasure there, but that is only half the process. There is more to treasuring up treasure in heaven than just putting things there. The other part is treasuring those things that you put there. Just as the earthly treasury is made up of the things you really treasure and love and depend on and cannot afford to lose, so is the heavenly one.

### How to make yourself desire unseen reward

So if you are doing things that God rewards but you are not motivated much by that reward then you are not treasuring up treasure in heaven. So how do you make your heart treasure those rewards? They are invisible, they are off in the future, you do not even know what they are exactly – how can you be motivated by something like that? And what should you do if you are not motivated by it? A gold medal is enough to drive an Olympian to unbelievable feats of self-denial, but it is not enough to motivate me because I just do not want a gold medal that bad. For a reward to serve as a motivation you have to be convinced that it really is a treasure. So if you are convinced in your mind but not deeply enough to where it affects your motivation, how do you fix that? How can you possibly get excited about a something if you have no idea what that thing is?

### *Trust the goodness of God*

That is actually not as impossible as it sounds. It happens all the time. Imagine you are a young child who has two uncles who come every Christmas, and they always bring gifts. The first uncle has no clue how to buy gifts for a kid, and every year he gives the lamest gifts you can imagine. But the second uncle just has a knack for knowing exactly what to get. Every year he gets you something that you never even thought to ask for, but it is always the best gift you get every year. And that happens year after year until finally, all you have to do is see that uncle pull up in front of the house and you start getting excited about his gift. He hands it to you to put under the tree when he first arrives, and you are full of joy – even though you do not have the slightest clue what it is. All you can see is wrapping paper. And he is not even very good at wrapping. He just uses brown packaging paper and duct tape, so it is the worst looking gift under the tree. But still, you are more excited about that gift than any of the others. Why? How can you be excited about something you cannot see, and you have no idea what it is? You can get excited about it because of your faith in that uncle's gift-giving. You trust in his generosity and in his ability to really make you happy. That is how you get excited about a gift you cannot see – you acquaint yourself with the goodness and generosity of the giver, and in his ability to make you happy. So the most important key for increasing your desire for God's rewards is to increase your understanding of His goodness, and there are two ways to do that.

### *Use earthly treasures as a model*

One is to learn more and more about His goodness from Scripture, and the second is to take advantages of your experiences of His goodness. Use the earthly pleasures God gives you as a model to teach your heart what His goodness is like. It is actually going too far to say we have no idea what these heavenly treasures will be. God has given us all kinds of indications of what they will be like. In fact, that is how Jesus began this whole sermon. Go back to Jesus' introduction in the Sermon on the Mount and there is a whole list of the rewards that will be given to us.

### *Intangible treasures*

We will be comforted, we will inherit the earth, we will be filled, we will be shown mercy, we will see God, we will be called sons of God. We know what all those things are like. We have never experienced them in full, but we have all received samples of them. We have all received samples of what comfort feels like, or being filled with satisfaction, or receiving mercy. So in some measure it is possible for us to imagine receiving those things in a much greater way. The reason we are tempted to put things in our earthly treasury is because those things have some appeal. And they have appeal because they are samples of heavenly treasures. And that applies both to tangible and intangible treasures. Remember, the biggest thing the Pharisees wanted to put in their earthly treasury was honor – an intangible treasure. The reason people try to show off their giving and praying and fasting is so people will be impressed with them and honor them. They were in sin for putting honor in their earthly treasury. However, is there any value to desiring honor for ourselves? Last week someone wrote this on the back of the prayer slip: "If honor is our desire, is that completely sinful or is there a way to store up honor for yourself in heaven?" That is an excellent question. And the answer is no, it is not completely sinful and yes, there is a way to store up honor for yourself in heaven.

**Romans 2:6 God "will give to each person according to what he has done." 7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.**

God will give you eternal life if you seek glory, honor, and immortality.

**8 But for those who are self-seeking ... there will be wrath and anger.**



So clearly there is a way to seek honor for yourself that is not self-seeking. It is self-seeking when you seek honor from men. But it is righteous and godly when you seek honor from God.

**1 Corinthians 4:5 wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.**

On Judgment Day righteous people will receive praise from God – not praise in the sense of worship, but like a little child receiving praise from mom and dad for taking his first steps. He will praise us. So the question of whether you are selfish and self-seeking or humble and godly is not a question of whether or not you crave honor and praise, but rather whether you treasure the honor and praise of men or treasure the honor and praise of God.

**John 12:42 many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.**

So the issue is not whether you desire honor, but rather from whom do you desire to receive honor? You can have honor from God and be thought a fool by man, or you can receive honor from man and be deemed a fool by God. And which of those you prefer shows where your heart is.

#### *Tangible treasures*

So use earthly treasures to teach your soul about heavenly treasures. That is why earthly treasures exist. And that is true not just for intangible things like honor or comfort; it is true of physical things too. Did you know that the eternal state will be a *physical* place? We will live forever on earth. When you die as a Christian your body goes in the ground and your spirit goes to be with the Lord in heaven. But that is a temporary situation. You will be a disembodied spirit in heaven from the day you die until the Second Coming. At the Second Coming there will be a resurrection and your body will be reunited with your spirit. Your body will be raised imperishable. No bad knees, no arthritis, no hair falling out – it will be a physical body that will last forever. And it will be on earth. “But wait a minute – I thought we would be in heaven forever.” We will. Do you know what the definition of heaven is? Heaven is the dwelling place of God. And after the resurrection God is going to pack up and get a U-Haul and move His dwelling place to earth. So earth and heaven will be the same place, because earth will be the dwelling place of God.

**Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men"**

So we will live forever on a new, physical, tangible earth with resurrected, immortal, physical, tangible bodies. People ask all the time, “Will there be animals in eternity?” Sure sounds like it from the book of Isaiah. Will there be football? Why wouldn't there be? Skydiving, snowboarding, baseball, rafting, rock climbing – why would all those things exist if not as samples of the world to come? Joni Ericson Tada (who has been a quadriplegic since she was a teenager) says that she fully intends on getting into pole-vaulting in eternity. She wants to pole-vault over the pearl gates. That will not really be necessary since the gates will always be open, but it would be awfully exciting given the size of those gates. The good things about this earth exist to teach us what the new earth will be like.

If God's way of communicating to us what eternity will be like is to say, “Look around at this earth and then imagine one of these except without the curse” – if that is how God wants us to think

about the eternal state then it stands to reason that the good things about this earth exist as samples of the really good things that will be in the new earth. There is a reason why reward in heaven is so often described in terms of being like money. The word treasure means, “treasure.” It has almost exactly the same semantic range as our word “treasure.” It is the kind of stuff you would find in a buried treasure chest – riches. There will be something very much like money in heaven. So if you like money, you are in luck.

So how do you increase your desire for heavenly reward? Use the most wonderful things in this world to train your soul to feel like a little child when he wakes up on Christmas morning and he is looking at all the gifts he is about to open. Imagine yourself arriving on Judgment Day and you hear those words from Matthew 25:34 "**Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance...**" And you are escorted into a room with a huge Christmas tree and a giant pile of gifts. And you say, “What are these?” And you are told, “The whole Trinity put their heads together and used all their infinite wisdom and infinite love and infinite power and infinite creativity to think of some gifts that you would really, really, really like.” That is real. It is as real as the chair you are sitting in. What a shame it would be to spend your whole life storing up treasure in a place where you cannot keep it and lose everything the day you die when you could have stockpiled unimaginable treasure in heaven that you would have been able to enjoy forever. This life is the dot, eternity is the line.

Live for the line and not for the dot.

**Benediction: 1 Corinthians 7:29 the time is short. From now on those ... who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; 31 those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.**

## Summary

Empty everything out of your earthly treasury (treasury = those things you treasure and cannot afford to lose). Having things in your earthly treasury causes selfishness. Seeking treasure for yourself in heaven is not selfish because it coincides with the best interests of others. Failing to be motivated by heavenly treasure is immoral because it is a lack of faith, it shows perverted desires, and it is a mark of pride. Fill your heavenly treasury by 1) placing things in there and 2) treasuring that reward. Increase your affections for that reward by trusting the goodness of God and by using earthly treasures as a model.

## Q&A Questions

- 1) Why would there be money in heaven?
- 2) How will things be acquired in heaven?
- 3) Will there be any reward for good things we did prior to salvation?
- 4) If work is toilsome now, how could there be work in heaven?
- 5) When we sin, do we lose reward or just fail to gain more reward?
- 6) Isn't our reward in heaven the presence of God alone? Why would there be anything else?
- 7) If you feel like the loss of something (such as family) would be devastating in your life, does that mean your family is in your earthly treasury?
- 8) Trials are gifts from God. So does that mean there will be trials (or other unpleasant gifts) in heaven?