

Learning from the Sermon on the Mount #28 “It’s Not Too Late: the Best Way to Save”

Message Notes, August 29, 2021

My Roller Coaster Confession

Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV) ¹⁹ “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.”

■ **Flow of Content:** discussion of property/savings and worry (6:19-34), specifically concrete issues of life such as the economy/finances. Economic and financial issues are always deeply related to our trust in God.

■ **The Ultimate Savings**

- Teaching on savings: negative—“do not lay up on earth” and positive—“lay up in heaven
- Treasure *thêsauros*
 - a. Comes from a word that refers to a place or container used to keep important or valuable things and possessions. Metaphorically, it refers to our “hearts.”
 - b. Not only monetary/financial concerns, but also honor, position, status, gifts, family, home, attachment to work in a wrong way, reputation among others, and other things a person considers valuable become “treasure.”
 - c. These things are not bad in and of themselves. Our attitude or attachment to them is the problem. (It’s not what you have, it’s how you feel about it).
 - d. Possessions themselves are not bad. The question is whether or not our interest and desire for them are finished in or completed (confined to) this world. (Will cover this point later)

➤ What are your treasures?

■ **Negative Savings:** Why are we not to lay up treasures on this earth?

- “Do not lay up treasures here on earth” (v. 19) literally translated, “don’t store up treasure as treasure,” with a strong caution given against storing treasure on earth as an end in itself and thus becoming bound up by that pursuit.
- Why? Because “moths destroy” refers to insects that devour/destroy clothing. Expensive clothing was considered a treasure.
- “Rust destroys” can also mean *to eat*, as stored grain and property are devoured by rats and other vermin.
- “Destroy” means *to disappear*. Even if you tried your best to lay treasures away, someone might steal them, or they might rot away. During NT times, houses and warehouses were made of hardened clay, so thieves would cut holes in the walls and steal through them. This possibility was another cause for concern.
- “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (v. 21): This truth applies to storing up treasure, whether on earth or in heaven. If you try to store treasure on earth, your focus will be earth-bound, but if you lay up heavenly treasure, your attention will be heaven-ward. Therefore, the attitude with which we manage our treasures is crucial.

➤ We have learned that “treasure” refers to a place where we collect things that we consider important. What have you collected so far?

■ **Positive Savings:** Encouraging people to lay up treasure in heaven (where is your heart headed?)

- Having the right perspective on life: According to the Bible, our life in this world is that of a sojourner, and it consistently pictures us as those on a journey to the eternal kingdom.
- In *The Purpose Driven Life*, Rick Warren says that life is a *test* (training), a *trust* (using well what is entrusted to a person), and a *temporary assignment* (preparation for eternity); cf. story of a missionary returning from the mission field
- Lloyd-Jones *Sermon on the Mount* (1982), p. 82
- The need for a change in outlook: We need a very different view of life from the one that dominates this world. This is a “perspective on life” that we each need to clarify as soon as possible, whether life ends here on earth, or it is preparation for eternity.
- Father: “What will you do after the Olympics?” Me: “I’ll figure that out then. For the time being, my greatest goal in life is to participate in them.” For me, “the Olympics” was a placeholder that represented a means by which to gain people’s approval.

■ **How Should We Change Our Way of Thinking?**

- Jesus praised the manager who gained friends with ill-gotten wealth (Luke 16:1-13)→ rapid turnaround, making a decision after seeing the outcome. This story comes between the “Prodigal Son” and “Lazarus and the Wealthy Man” and teaches the disciples that wisdom considers the brevity of life (See Psalm 90:12)

Luke 16:1-13 ¹ He also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. ² And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’ ³ And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’ ⁵ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ He said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ ⁷ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ ⁸ The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. ⁹ And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings. ¹⁰ “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. ¹¹ If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹² And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? ¹³ No servant 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.”

- Do not waste the opportunities God provides for you to reflect on your life.
Hebrews 13:7 (ESV) “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.”

■ **Conclusion**

- How have you viewed life up until this point? How about from now on?
- What are your treasures? How are you using those treasures?