

Storing up Treasures

by Duane Troyer

This sermon emphasizes the importance of storing up treasures in heaven by being generous, sharing with the poor, and not being consumed by earthly possessions. It challenges listeners to have a single eye focused on God, to serve Him wholeheartedly, and to avoid the trap of serving both God and wealth. The message highlights the need for repentance, sacrificial giving, and a radical return to the teachings of Jesus, especially regarding caring for the less fortunate.

Scripture: Matthew 6:19, Luke 12:15, 1 Timothy 6:17, James 5:1, Proverbs 22:9, Ecclesiastes 5:10, Proverbs 19:17

Topics: "Heavenly Treasures", "Generosity and Sacrifice"

Description

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Transcript

Grace be with you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I really appreciate what's been shared in the opening and in the comments. I had a thought or two that I thought I'd wait until I'm here to share, but I agree that it's not always easy to tell when someone has a scornful heart or not.

One of the synonyms for scorn would be mock. We're not to be mockers. We're not to sit with the scornful.

We're not to sit with the mockers. Even mocking has more than one definition, I think. Maybe it's not the worst way we can be a mocker, and yet it's mockery.

That is when we imitate people. Why is a mockingbird called a mockingbird? Because it imitates other birds. One of the things that ties in with what was shared is, what do we laugh about? People who have this habit and are really good at imitating another person, they can almost always make everybody laugh.

I just think we should guard against it. It's in us. You know why children do act like their parents when they're little? Because they're wanting to imitate.

That's not bad. That's a God-designed thing. But when we get older, we ought not to.

Especially in this making fun of someone way, imitating the way they act and talk, and trying to get everybody to laugh about it. So, let's pray. Let's stand and pray.

Our Father in Heaven, we thank you for all your love to us, your mercies, your goodness and kindness. Thank you, Father, for giving us this day and this beautiful day. Thank you for giving us sound minds and healthy bodies and brothers and sisters to gather with.

I pray, Lord, for your presence here, for your Spirit to be with us and to fill this room, and to give us all eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand. I pray as we look into your Word, Lord, that you would just let the Spirit of Truth guide us and convict us and encourage us. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. So, I want to continue into the next portion of the Sermon on the Mount.

For those of you who this may be your first time here, I've been, in the last months, for quite half a year, maybe more, we've been taking a thorough look at the Sermon on the Mount, which is Matthew 5, 6, and 7. This, in my opinion, is the greatest sermon given by the greatest teacher of all times. He's the greatest king. He's the king of kings, and he's establishing a new kingdom.

He came to establish a new kingdom, and in this sermon, which he gave early on in his ministry, he's laying the foundation for what it means to be in this kingdom. He ends this by saying that this is foundational, to hear and to do these things that I've told you here. This is how you build on the right foundation, a rock-solid foundation that can't be moved.

And, come hell or high water, it will be steadfast. One of my goals has been to inspire myself and others to a deeper and a more radical return to these teachings, and to be able to see the grace and the truth in it. To see that in these teachings of Jesus is new life.

New life for a new creature in a new creation. And today, in today's passage, it's in Matthew 6, and we'll start at verse 19, and we're moving away from these secret things that Jesus talked about. This good secret that we can have of praying and fasting and having this secret almsgiving that fosters a relationship with God that no one else needs to know about.

And we move away from those things into something that is very tangible, very visible. In fact, the rest of chapter 6 here is somewhat all tied together. It's kind of all tied into this subject of earthly possessions, about what we have in our possession or seek to have in our possession, why we have it in our possession or why we seek to have it in our possession, and where we have this treasure as the translators translated it.

And so let's look at Matthew 6, starting in verse 19. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, where thieves do not break in or steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. So then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! 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 wealth.

We'll leave the rest of those verses in that chapter for the next message and focus mostly on these today. So all of humanity desires a good life. We desire to have a life that is a pleasant experience, a life that is free from suffering.

No one likes to go hungry. No one likes to shiver with cold. No one likes to get sick.

No one likes to suffer. And in the course of human events, there's been a really brief little time when that existed for all humanity, though there wasn't much. There weren't many humans.

There was a time when the earth brought forth plenty and it brought it forth perfectly. And the climate was perfect. And there was not a single lack of a single good thing.

This, of course, was in the Garden of Eden. It was in this paradise of Eden. It was this place where heaven and earth were together in perfect harmony.

But our existence there as humans didn't last long. It only lasted a really brief time because there was sin and we were driven out and the earth was cursed. And from there on, we had to toil and sweat to produce the necessities to survive.

And ever since that, we humans have been, we've clawed and chiseled and chopped and hammered. We've dug down and we've built up and we've bought and we've sold and we've invented things, we've fabricated things, we've forged things, we've manufactured them. And what happens to these things? They rust, they rot, they decay, they break, they burn, they are stolen.

And what do we do? We do it all over again. We've put value on these things and we've come up with a medium of exchange called money that expresses this value. And these things and the money that we are able to acquire, these are our possessions.

And we can do with them whatever we please. And it is what today's text calls treasures. There's always been and there always will be a portion of humanity that acquires more than enough of these things.

They acquire more than enough possessions than they need to live and live without suffering. And there's always a portion of humanity that suffer from a lack of these possessions. There's obviously many factors that contribute to it.

Sometimes it's people being lazy or making poor choices or having poor management. Sometimes it's due to the environment they're in or the climate they have. The surroundings just don't produce much and they suffer because of that.

But more often than not, the opportunity or the lack of opportunity is the result of choices made by people with more power who create this kind of opportunity or lack of it. Sometimes it's poor choices. Sometimes it's through greed, though, that they exploit the poor in order to get more for themselves.

And one of the messages that is sounded and resounded through the Old and the New Testament is that God hears the cry of the poor. He hears the cry of the poor, specifically those poor who either directly or indirectly are afflicted by the oppression of those with more wealth and more power than they have. Psalm 34.6 says, The poor man cried and the Lord heard him.

Deuteronomy 15.11 says, The poor will never cease out of the land. Therefore open your hand wide to your brother. And God gave Moses, when God gave the law to Moses to give to the people, because he's

making this covenant with the seed of Abraham, the descendants of Abraham, He gives him laws for this purpose.

Laws like, every seventh year, God wants the people to not plow or harvest the fields. You leave it there for the poor people. He gives laws like, when you do harvest your fields, don't harvest all the way out to the edges and into the corners.

Leave that for the poor people. He gives laws like, and says, if you're out gathering your sheaves, and you come to the end of the field and you look back and you see, Oh, I missed a couple sheaves out there. He says, don't go back and get them.

Leave them there. Leave them there for the poor. Is there a problem? Okay.

Leave some for the gleaners. And these are laws that God placed upon a people who didn't naturally just have this heart to share with the poor. In short, this old law is saying, to those who have possessions or the ability to gather possessions, He's saying, don't gather everything that you can.

Okay, leave some for the poor people to gather. And like usual, Jesus, as He's been doing through this sermon, He's raising the standard to a new level. A new level of how to gather and store up possessions, a new level of caring for the poor.

So let's look here again at Matthew 6, 19. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. This laying up or storing up treasures, the meaning of that is like a deposit of wealth or a store of wealth.

I think the Greek word kind of gives this impression of like a granary or a storehouse. And so I don't think Jesus is referring, when He's talking here, I don't think He's referring to our daily bread or the clothes on our back or necessities like that. But He's specifically speaking of investments, things we would store up for the future in order to keep us from suffering or needing to continue to work.

He's specifically addressing that thing. And Jesus is saying, don't store your possessions here in this earth, because after all, this place is cursed. There's moth and all kinds of little critters and insects that destroy things.

There's rust. There's thieves. It's just not secure.

And even if we could preserve these things from all those things, if we can preserve these things from being moth-eaten or rusting away or decaying, the Scripture tells us that someday there will come a big bang and a fire that will melt the elements and the earth will burn and everything that we've invested here on the earth, our investment's going to be reduced to a small pile of ashes. It's a poor investment. It's a bad place to store things.

Jesus is not saying, don't store up treasures. He's saying, don't store up treasures on earth. Because He goes on in verse 20 to say, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

This realm called heaven has not and will not be cursed. There's no moth. There's no rust.

There's no thieves. If you store treasures there, they will be secure. Even against that fire that is coming and will burn all the elements.

How do we store up treasures in heaven? These tangible, visible things called money and possessions, how can we store those up in an invisible, intangible place called heaven? I think for that we can just allow the scriptures to interpret the scriptures. In Matthew 19, when Jesus met that young man who had great possessions, he ends up telling him this. If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor and you will have treasures in heaven and come and follow me.

There is that very term, treasures in heaven, and this is how he could do it. He could take those possessions that he was sitting on and he could sell them and give them to the poor and he would have treasures in heaven. In case we're inclined to think that that only applies to the rich young ruler, Jesus said about the exact same words in Luke.

It wasn't to one person in particular. He gave this command to his disciples. It's in Luke 12.

He says, sell your possessions and give to charity. Make yourself money belts which do not wear out. An unfailing treasure in heaven where no thief comes near nor moth destroys.

I think it's clear enough that this is how you store up treasures in heaven. It's a different standard than what was given in the old about just don't gather everything you can and leave some for the poor. Here he's saying, no, but sell what you can sell.

Sell what you have. Sell what you can sell and give it to the poor. Unlike some of the commentaries I looked at just to see what they say, who define this in very uncertain ways of what it means to store up treasures in heaven, some giving this thought that the way you store up treasures in heaven is you put your thoughts and your hearts on heavenly things.

That interpretation probably comes from the truth of the fact that the Lord does look unto the heart and he does judge accordingly. Yet if we just allow the scriptures to interpret the scriptures, it has a very specific definition. It is in selling the possessions we've laid up for the future and taking that money or the money that we've laid up for the future and giving it to the poor.

That doesn't take away from the fact that the Lord judges according to the heart. In fact, he solidifies it in the next verse when he says, For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. It doesn't say be careful that your heart is not where your treasure is.

It just simply says where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. So in Proverbs 19.17 it says, He who has mercy on the poor lends to God and he will repay it again. And Jesus drove this point home over and over and over again.

I'll read just a couple parables to you. The first one is in Luke chapter 12 again. Starting in verse 15 where he says, Then he said to them, Beware and be on your guard against every form of greed.

For not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions. And he told them a parable saying, The land of a rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself and saying, What shall I do since I have no place to store my crops? Then he said, This is what I will do.

I will tear down my barns and build larger ones. And there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, So, you have many goods laid up for many years to come.

Take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, You fool, this very night your soul is required of you. And now who will own what you have prepared? So is the man who stores up treasures for himself, and is not rich toward God.

The next parable I want to read is in Luke 16. Starting in verse 1. Now he also says to the disciples, There was a rich man who had a manager. And this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions.

And he called him and said to him, What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager. 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. I am ashamed to beg.

I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management, people will welcome me into their homes. And he summoned each one of his master's debtors, and he began saying to the first, How much do you owe my master? And he said, a hundred measures of oil. And he said to him, Take your bill and sit down quickly and write fifty.

Then he said to another, And how much do you owe? And he said, a hundred measures of wheat. And he said to him, Take your bill and write eighty. And his master praised the unrighteous manager, because he had acted shrewdly.

For the sons of this age are more shrewd in their relation to their own kind than the sons of light. And I say to you, Make friends for yourself by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings. There's probably few parables that have left people scratching their heads as much as this one.

It appears like the Lord is commending a man who stole his master's possessions and did something with him to secure a safe place for himself. But if that's all we can see in this parable, we're really missing it. So here's this servant in his parable who's been appointed as a manager.

He's been given the position of a manager over the master's goods. And he has the position, apparently the position, of taking care of accounts payable and accounts receivable. And I think as a manager, he probably already has a certain level of authority and liberty to make judgments or to do, to some extent, things that he wants to with his master's possessions.

Remember that when it calls this man an unrighteous steward, he is that before he did this thing. He's considered the unrighteous or the unjust steward not because of what he did here. He was that before this happened.

He was squandering his master's goods. He was wasting them. That's why he was an unrighteous and an unjust steward.

So because of that, because he was an unrighteous steward who was squandering and wasting his master's goods, he was given a notice that he's about to lose his position. And this shrewd man started thinking. And he thought, I'm not able to dig.

I don't know if he was actually handicapped or if he was just a wimp because he hasn't been working or what. But he reasoned with him and himself, I'm not able to dig and I'm ashamed to beg. And so what am I going to do? He probably didn't have many friends like most squanders and wasteful people don't.

Or selfish wasteful people anyway. And so he thought, this is what I'll do. I'm going to quickly make some friends before I lose this position with my master's goods.

It's the only thing I probably have. He says, I'm quickly going to make some friends so that when I lose this possession, at least they'll take me into their house. At least I'll have a friend to go to that'll say, yeah, come on in.

You did me a good favor. Stay in my house. And so thinking that, he calls these debtors and he releases portions of their debt.

Now it's understandable why we scratch our heads and wonder about the goodness of such a decision. For instance, if any of you would ever come to me and be in this position and ask me for advice, I would never give you this advice. You'd come to say, look, I was wasteful.

I was working for this man and I squandered his goods. Now he's going to fire me. What should I do? I'd never tell you to go take some of his goods and do the thing that this man does.

I would tell you, well, you're just going to have to reap what you sowed. And you can plead for another chance, but if he doesn't give it to you, you're just going to have to get a shovel and start digging. Or if you're actually not able to do that, we won't let you starve.

We'll take care of you, but this is just the way it is. You can't do this. That's the advice I give.

But Jesus concludes this parable by the Master praising him for his shrewdness. And he says, The children of this age are wiser with their kind of people than the children of light. Now here's what I want us to think about.

What are the ways that we are like this unjust steward? Here's some things that we are just like him. We've been entrusted with property and possession that belongs to someone else. We've been entrusted with possessions that belong to God.

We've been given a position as a manager or a steward over these possessions. Like this steward in the parable, we have been given an account that our stewardship is going to come to an end. We, like this steward, will have to give an account for how we stewarded these possessions.

Probably for many of us, like this steward, there's been a point in our life where we wasted or squandered some of our master's possessions. Regardless, if that's not the case, we're still going to lose our position. And we've been given a notice of that.

Like this steward, what we do with our master's goods will impact our life after we lose this position. And like this steward, it is in giving it away that we secure for ourselves a habitation after we lose this position. There's so many ways that we are just like this steward.

The only difference, the big difference is that our master has instructed us to do this very thing. This man here, he's this shrewd, worldly guy and he schemes and he thinks and he comes up with this idea on his own. We've been told to do it, and yet we're slow.

We're slow to get it. There are a number of places throughout the Scripture where you get this idea or you get this picture, how this works out in reality. You get this image that God will judge people by appealing to the poor people of what they have to say about this man.

It's really sobering. Going back to Matthew 6, Jesus goes on to say, the eye is the lamp of the body. So then if your eye is clear, so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness. This is another couple of verses that might, if it's like me, it's puzzled me over the years, but I think we do well to leave these verses in their context.

Jesus here has just got done talking about possessions and how and where to store them up that's safe, and how not to store them up. And the way to store them up is to sell them and give to the poor, to be merciful to the poor. And then he gives these two verses about having a single eye, or a good eye versus a bad eye.

And then he goes right on again to talk about serving two masters and about how we cannot serve God in money. So in that context, I think the people familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures would have probably caught on in a way that we don't if we're not. I'm going to read three verses from you.

Out of the Old Testament. The first is in Deuteronomy 15.9 where he says, Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying the seventh year, the year of release is at hand and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing. And he cry out to the Lord against you and it becomes sin among you.

Proverbs 22.9 says, He who has a generous eye will be blessed for he gives his bread to the poor. Proverbs 28.22 says, A man with an evil eye hastens after riches and does not consider what poverty will come upon him. So right here, following this teaching of how not to lay up treasures on earth by gathering and hoarding things for the future, but rather laying up treasures in heaven by selling our possessions and giving to the poor.

He says, in my understanding of what he's saying, he's saying, if you can see this clearly, if you can see this with a single vision, your whole life will be full of light. If you can't, if your eye is evil, according to these passages in the Hebrew Scripture, the eye being evil is the one who has some greed in there, who's not really ready to give to the poor, to share and distribute with the poor. If your eye is evil, we walk in darkness.

In that parallel passage in Luke 11, where he talks about the same thing, if your eye is single, your whole body is full of light, in there he adds this, then watch out that the light in you is not darkness. Watch out. Be careful.

For many people that once had a clear eye and they saw this teaching with a single eye and clearly, it doesn't happen all of a sudden that the light goes out and there's darkness, but slowly our eyelids fall shut and the light in us becomes darkness. And if we close our eyes to this truth, how great is the darkness or the blindness. It's interesting to me that it seems like the translators, I don't know why, but there's some discrepancy in how they would translate that word single, like this translation says clear, some of them even say sound, but like the King James in the New King James says, if your eye be single, if your eye be single, which as best as I could tell is a fair enough translation, but what does that mean? What does it mean to have a single eye? Well, what's the opposite of single vision? Double vision.

Double vision, which is seeing two images of the same thing. Right? That's what double vision would be. And what do we see when we go right on into the next verse? He says, no one can serve two masters.

No one can serve two masters. If you see two images and if there's one master and you kind of see two images of who you could devote yourself to, you've got double vision, you've got an evil eye. If I, I know we're in this context and so I probably can't catch you off guard, but if I ask you some, if I ask you like, who's the two masters that we can serve? Probably, we'd say God and the devil.

And I'd ask you, well, which one are you serving? And you'd say, well, for sure you're not serving the devil. You're not devoting any time to the devil. There ain't no way that you could be accused of serving the devil.

And yet, in what Jesus is saying here, he's saying the two masters are God and money. God and wealth. And how confident are we to still say, there's no way you can accuse me of serving wealth.

I'm not devoted to it. God will have nothing of it. This verse says, 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 wealth. It is, it is as a pouring to God.

If we are trying to do that, if we're, if we're trying to focus on who the master is and we're kind of seeing two images and it's God and wealth, it is as, it is as a pouring to God, as if your wife tried to serve you and devote herself to you and another husband. It's, it's a pouring. I want to look at a few, a few more passages.

First, Timothy 6. Starting in verses 17, he says, instruct those who are rich in the present world, not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Now, if we would stop right there, you could almost preach a prosperity, a prosperity gospel message out of that. And to be fair, there's something, it means something, there's something there.

I think it does, it does attack the ideas of asceticism, which I think are a cheap counterfeit to what Jesus really, really wants us to get. But let's keep on reading. So he says, he's talking to those who are rich in the world.

He says, instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, and to be ready to share. Now, if we stop there, we could still kind of have this idea that wealth for ourselves and to enjoy and to gather is good, as long as we don't put our heart on it and we're just ready to share whenever the need comes. And yet, let's go one verse more, where he says, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.

Here it is. He's quoting Jesus again. I think it is just safe for me to say he's talking to us here.

He's talking to people who live in this environment where there's lots of opportunity and where it is not hard to gather more than our necessities. And he's saying to us, be ready to share, do good, be ready to distribute, and store up your treasures in heaven. Storing up our treasures in heaven by not storing them up here, but distributing them, selling them, or however, for the sake of those who do not have this opportunity.

The way of the Christian should be distribution and not accumulation. We see there in Acts that when the people were filled with the Spirit of God, those who had lands and houses, their possessions became less as they shared it with those who didn't have them. Can that be said of us? In 1875 there was a man named Karl Marx and he popularized this slogan from each according to his means to each according to

his needs.

And that is a concept that is straight out of the Scriptures and it is in agreement with Jesus' teachings. And he won the hearts of one third of the population with it. There is something within our hearts.

There is something, some hidden light within us that knows that in the world before it was cursed, that's how it worked. In a world before there was greed and selfishness, that is how it worked. From each according to his means to each according to his needs.

And there is something within us that knows that in the eternal kingdom to come it will be that way. The reason, the reason what Karl Marx and others like him have tried and presented doesn't work and is devastating is because they are forcing it upon people who are willing or unwilling. They are doing it without grace and voluntary humility.

They are doing it without embracing the Beatitudes of Christ. They are doing it without being regenerated. But we, we are to have a new heart.

We are to be free of greed and selfishness. We are to have a heart into which is born a new kingdom with new values. A place where heaven and earth come back together again.

I was recently reading through the second book to the Corinthians. I was really blessed with a lot of it but I was especially blessed with chapter 8. And I am not going to read that whole chapter. But I just want to point out a few things.

Paul is addressing the believers here in Corinth. Corinth. And he is urging them to contribute to this thing that they are trying to do.

They are trying to raise or gather funds I believe to take back to the people in Jerusalem who were suffering need. The believers in Jerusalem who were suffering need. And he is urging the believers at Corinth to contribute to this.

He starts in by saying in verse 1, he says, Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. For I testify that according to their ability and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord. He is urging the believers at Corinth to take an example from the ones in Macedonia.

These people of their own accord gave as they were able and even beyond that. And I encourage you to sometimes just read this whole chapter and get the feel of how Paul goes about this urging. He uses Jesus for an example.

In verse 9 he says, For you know... Again, remember what he said there in the beginning? He said... Let me read that again. We wish to make known to you the grace of God. And then he describes what happened.

He's saying that's a work of grace. This thing that happened to the brothers in Macedonia, that's a work of grace. And then here in verse 9 he says, For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor so that you through his poverty might become rich.

This is a work of grace. Throughout this whole chapter, and I encourage you to read it sometime, but throughout this whole chapter Paul is urging liberal giving, equality among brothers, and only according to your own voluntary readiness. And as I read it, I recognized the positive and encouraging way that Paul was going about it, and it was far more compelling than when someone tries to pin you down into their convictions of what you need to sell and what you need to give.

That's not the way Paul went about it. I want to come close to closing this. I'm going to read some quotes.

Well, there's a few more. There's a few more scriptures. And then I've got a few quotes here to read.

The first one is in Ecclesiastes where he says, He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver, nor he who loves abundance with increase. This also is vanity. When goods increase, they increase who eat them.

So what profit have the owners except to see them with their eyes? The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much. But the abundance of the rich man will not permit him to sleep. There is a severe evil which I have seen under the sun.

Riches kept for the owner to his hurt, but those riches perish through misfortune. When he begets a son, there is nothing in his hand. As he comes from his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and he shall take nothing from his labor, which he may carry away in his hand.

And this also is a severe evil. Just exactly as he came, so shall he go. And what profit has he who has labored for the wind? James, the brother of Jesus, had some severe things to say about the rich.

He said, Come now, you rich. Weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches are corrupted.

Your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded. And their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire.

You have heaped up treasures in the last days. Indeed, the wages of the laborers who have mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out. And the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

You have lived on earth in pleasure and luxury. You have fattened your hearts as in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and you have murdered the just.

He does not resist you. That's in James 5, 1-6. Here's a quote from Lactantius that would have been written in the second century.

Someone may say, If I do these things, I have no possessions. What if a large number of people are in one, suffer cold, and have been taken captive or die? If anyone thinks this way, he will deprive himself of his property in a single day. Shall I throw away the estate acquired by my own labor or by that of my ancestors? Must then I, myself, live by the pity of others? And Lactantius answers that question this way, Why do you fear to turn a frail and perishable asset into one that is everlasting? Why do you fear to entrust your treasures to God as their preserver? For in that case, you will not need to fear thief and robber, no rust, no tyrant.

He who is rich toward God can never be poor. If you esteem justice so highly, lay aside the burden that oppresses you and follow justice. Free yourself from bondage and chains so that you can run to God without any hindrance.

Moving along in history, here's a quote from a man named David Lipscomb in 1873. He says, The man that can spend money in extending his already broad acres while his brother and his brother's children cry for bread, the woman that can spend money in purchasing a stylish bonnet, an expensive cloak, or a fine dress merely to appear fashionable while her sister and her sister's children are shivering with cold and scarce able to cover their nakedness, are no Christians, have not a promise of a single blessing from God, and notwithstanding they have been baptized for the remission of sins, may be unremitted in their attendance upon the appointments of the Lord's house and constant and regular in their family devotions, yet they are on the broad road that leads to death. And here's one short quote from a man that lived less than a hundred years ago, Jim Elliot, where he said, He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

I just want to end this message with a confession that it was challenging for me to prepare this message and I've been lately convicted about this subject without even digging into this, preparing for this. And I just, my eyes have not shut and yet I can just realize that there's something, there's something deceitful about riches and somehow like in trying to navigate through the business world and so forth, I've come to a place where I did not intend to go. I'm at a place where I did not intend to be ten years ago when I decided to take Jesus' teachings on this subject more seriously.

I've shared some of these things more in depth with certain brothers. But I'm confessing that to you all and I just, as I studied the burden of the challenge or something to speak on this subject, went away when I just realized this is truth. This is grace and truth.

This is light. This is precious. I want to do something about it.

I want something to change and I just invite you to help and to join in taking this teaching of Jesus seriously. May the Lord add His blessing. You're welcome to share comments and corrections.

Thank you, Brother Duane. You've heard it before, I guess, but John D. Rockefeller was the richest man in the world at the turn of the century. Someone asked him once, Max, how much is enough? What did he say? Outley, what did he say? Brother Brett? How much is enough, to ask Rockefeller, the richest man in the world? Subject which Jesus spoke about more than any other subject.

I don't want to hear it. I wish I was from Newfoundland and not from the United States, but in the United States, the subject, they don't want to hear it because it's the richest country in the world. The subject he spoke about more than any other is money.

Money, money, money. Thanks, Brother Duane. Money, money, money.

The apostles, Jesus said, how hard it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Okay, good point. Then he bowed an eye.

Then he said again, children, I say to you how hard it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. He had to say it twice to get the eyes raised. Yeah, but we left everything.

Yeah, yeah. Go to Third World Country and sell it all, yeah. Okay, no.

The widow's mite, but we don't want to give it all away. The widow's mite, it wasn't how much she gave. It was what? On the widow's mite, the point of that is how much she had left.

Zero. She had zero. And you know she starved to death after she gave that away, Henry? The widow, she starved to death.

No, God will protect her. God provided, he'll protect us. I need it more than you, Dwayne.

I need it more than you. I'm a rich, I'm a fat American. Us Americans are the top 2 or 5 percent of all the world, and we're still griping about just a little bit more, just a little bit more.

The Lord be magnified. May we repent. Yeah, thank you, Dwayne.

I've had some thoughts too about Remember the Old Testament talked about the fat shepherds. It said, Woe unto you fat shepherds who feed yourselves and leave my sheep to starve alone. Something like that.

I was thinking also in the same sense, we can be spiritually rich and not give to the poor either too. Think about the man with the talent. He hid himself in the earth with the gospel.

A brother said that in the comments one Sunday. He said, We're the ones who know the Sermon on the Mount. We better get it together.

And I appreciated that. A brother told me, He was like, A man can have 100 acres. He just needs to use it for the kingdom of God.

And that's really true. Even if we don't, just still use what we have, 2 Corinthians 8.12 For there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man has, and not according to what he does not have. For not that other men be eased and you burdened, but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want, that there may be equality.

Thanks for the message. Invisible stuff is what's real or matters. Gold doesn't matter.

Dollars don't matter. Houses don't matter. It can burn.

It can melt. It's stolen. I just especially thought, I kind of thought it was a little twist at the end there where he said, eternal, he bought eternal habitations.

He didn't quite say treasury, he said eternal, or everlasting. Habitations, and I thought, just my thought was that, when you do good to someone, and they're grateful, they put you in a little place in their heart, like, oh, you're nice. If you do something bad to somebody, they put you in a bad place in their heart.

If you apologize, they forgive you, they put you back in a good place. Obviously, if you're drowning and somebody saved your life, you'd put them in a real good, they'd have a real good habitation, a real good place, that they'd live in your heart. When you help the poor, they'll be like, oh, I'll never forget that guy, that guy.

I was hungry, and he fed me. He puts you in a good place, and it's an everlasting place. I don't quite get how the judgment's going to work, but I get the impression from several things that are taught in the

Scripture that being in that place in somebody's heart is really going to affect the judgment, how God judges us.

And vice versa, it's what people putting oppressors in a bad place in their heart is going to have a bad effect. The other thing I thought was when I hear you teach on these things, Duane, and I'm challenged, I imagine somebody looking at his stuff, let's say the rich young ruler, but it's every one of us, considering his life, considering his stuff, we imagine he's this real extreme character. Probably none of us are in that extreme a place, but wherever we are, as we consider what we're to do with whatever riches that we have, and treat them in this way, like as I'm hearing it, as I'm understanding Jesus talking, teaching, what to do, I especially catch myself trying to keep myself from not having to work as hard later and have pleasant things or pleasures.

I imagine somebody on the verge of deciding, can I do this? He has this thought as he's about to take Jesus in his words and follow through. He's like, okay, this guy better be right. This seems so foolish.

This seems so dumb. All my hard work, all my security, just give that away and live like a sparrow and trust that my work tomorrow will provide for me for the next few days or for that day. I guess that's what it means when it says, whosoever believeth in him.

When it talks about faith, when it talks about trusting him. That's like saying, okay, something in there like this. I hope this guy knows what he's talking about.

I hope this is really what God wants. He better be right. Oh boy, I'm really making myself.

When we make ourselves vulnerable, utterly, completely vulnerable to whatever the consequences are of doing what he said, that's having faith in him. That's believing in him was a thought that I had. Yeah, this was one of those messages that we've got to figure out what this means and put some wheels to it, make it happen.

That would be, I'm not sure what that would be. If we don't put wheels to it, then we can talk about it and I'll go home and keep on going as we always have. But if there's something that we have to repent from that would have to happen and that means we're going to change.

I tend to think of myself as if there's something that needs to be done, let's do it. I don't know what to say further, but I appreciate it. Teaching.

I believe that's what he's saying. But some of these people, it seems like they're poor people that you didn't pay. Some of them may be brothers and some of them may not be brothers, but the Proverbs say that he who gives to the poor lends to the lowly.

And somehow this transaction fits the saying. If you despise the poor and disadvantage them, then it's the same as despising God and living in pleasure and fattening your heart. Which, it does seem insane.

I mean, it's totally contrary to all rational judgment to think that a person could want the greatest pleasure in your life. Who wants that? I don't naturally wake up and think that, but I think that there's something that the more people draw to God the more they're going to suffer in this world for the things that they think are true and right. When you give away your possessions, you're going to burn for it.

In this world, you're going to suffer. And God's going to provide for you, but it may not be according to the measure that you desire. I think that's real.

Like, in America, the standard of every man according to his appetite and personal satisfaction, that is evident to me that that is not what Jesus is talking about. And it's easy, like, Christianity and the Western economic system of capitalism have been sold as a package for hundreds of years now. Like, people have made Christianity and the Westernization of the world nearly the same thing.

And when you see order and industry, people nearly say that it might as well be Christian because it took something that was not prosperous in the way that a Western-minded man made it that way. But it also went hand-in-hand with driving countless people from their lands and taking it over. Wholesale slaughters.

I mean, like, to bring about industrialization in this world has taken a killer kind of people. And it's still oppressing people. And I think we're deceiving ourselves if we think that industry and prosperity are the same, you know, like, as God has the way that he looks at our life.

Like, he says that we're going to lose our life in this world. We're going to suffer for it. And, like, the blessings of the Old Testament pertain to all of these very prosperous things.

I'll refuse the canker worms, you know what I mean? Like, refuse the crops, refuse your cattle to live, et cetera, et cetera. But that is not what Jesus said about our lives in this world. But I think it's very hard to overcome that because people want to praise you for these things if your life looks financially orderly and you can compete with people.

They're inclined to bless you. But Jesus says, woe unto you when every man speaks well of you. Look, I think to myself when I think of these things, like, for whom am I denying myself? Like, you look around at a store and all the bountiful blessings, like, how can you like, people will be like, well, how can you turn it down? It's so cheap.

Why not buy it? Why not buy ten? And I think to myself, like, that is something that's really hard to overcome in this country that is so hard to abundance. Like, why not invest in it? Why not buy me? Like, why not keep me? You're giving me your friends. Like, I just think it's really hard to not be distracted by all of these things.

And even poor people sometimes I don't necessarily think that more is always what they need for but even the poor people in this land seem to be spiritually negligent in these ways because they're so well fed sometimes. I mean, it is not always the case that people lack for their faults. You know, I mean, sometimes people really lack and hardship came upon them but somehow I think it's like there's some people like one time I brought brought some food to a mission and they'd already I think they'd been fed three times already by that time of the day but the guy still wanted to sample what we brought.

You know what I mean? He'd already eaten but he was just like but I'll try it, man. You know what I mean? Like, somehow I think like without even though I'm not promoting asceticism or willfully exposing yourself to deprivation of some things you can't prove where your heart is. If you don't willfully deny yourself in a land where there's such abundance I don't know how you can bring yourself to this place where you would have affections for the things that belong to God in the same way as a person who got very little in a place where there was extreme deprivation and it's way harder and I think that people that live in a rich country that voluntarily deny themselves it would be harder for them to get to heaven but the crown would be

greater because they would have to discipline themselves more.

I mean, it's easy it's easy to be poor if you were put in that circumstance you're just like well, I didn't bring myself to it I'm afraid of God but I think it's harder to deny yourself you might not even find a person to give to you know what I mean? nobody thinks nobody thinks these thoughts or having these experiences Roger, I've actually had a good look you know, in the eyes of the legal but John D. Martin had a better thought I thought I could correct him for the discussion after we leave tonight or something but I'm going to give when I die everyone I end up I'm going to get \$10,000 I'm dreaming I had that money everyone here is going to get \$10,000 when I die I'm going to lay up treasures in heaven when I die you know what John D. says you're not laying any treasures on heaven when you die you give the money to them I give a line and that will be a treasure in heaven but you can't lay up treasures in heaven by having a will John, you're going to get \$10,000 when I die Johnny, Micah no, I give it to you now and you can lay up treasures in heaven but don't that's what he said about laying up wills that's what he said about laying up wills that's what he said about laying up wills about laying up wills that's what he said about laying up wills that's what he said about laying up wills that's what he said about laying up wills that's what he said about laying up wills that's what he said adding two if we are disobedient and in that the sessions we have is it possible that we utterly scorn the lord and don't realize that it seemed kind of kind of sharp to I read that before you think about all the scorn yeah he was also Counted to be the first one Yeah, he was, and David the rich man, but in the whole thing, it was like, you have utterly scorned the Lord. We do not want, we do not want that. Yeah, he was, and David the rich man, but in the whole thing, it was like, you have utterly scorned the Lord.

Yeah, he was, and David the rich man, but in the whole thing, it was like, you have utterly scorned the Lord. The rose of life, no deeper is the flow, nor less than he of armor tried, of shield and spear and bow. Blood of song were still we pressed, through evil and through good, through pain and poverty and woe, through peril and through blood, still faithful to our God and to our Captain true.

We follow where he leads the way, the kingdom in our view. Careless birds, all left and gathered, from the town of Bridal Spring, made the hearts as simple as ever, shared the grace of God's name. Love one another, love self the Savior, children of faith, apologize to him.

Love one another, love self the Savior, children of faith, apologize to him. Love is life, pure and holy, friendship is his sacred part. For a moment reckless, folly, lust and desire, pain and part.

Love one another, love self the Savior, children of faith, apologize to him. Love one another, love self the Savior, children of faith, apologize to him. Careless words are lightly spoken, different thoughts are rashly stirred, brightest things of life are broken by a single careless word.

Love one another, love self the Savior, children of faith, apologize to him. Love one another, love self the Savior, children of faith, apologize to him. Thank you.

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