

The Real Treasure

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prioritizing spiritual values and relationships with God over material wealth and possessions.

Duration: 51:09

Scripture: Matthew 5:1, Matthew 6:19-21, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 27:30, Luke 10:38-42, Acts 20:35, Hebrews 2:3

Topics: "Eternal Reward"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the danger of focusing solely on worldly possessions and wealth. He warns that young people often prioritize making money and end up on the wrong path, leading to their own destruction. The preacher also highlights the issue of human trafficking and the exploitation of young girls, urging parents to be vigilant and aware of their children's activities. The sermon is based on Matthew 6:19-21, where Jesus teaches about the importance of storing up treasures in heaven rather than on earth.

Transcript

We find our text in Matthew chapter 6. Today I'd like to speak about two things. Two things which tend to be a problem to many Christians, that they lose God's glory and that they eventually end up in hell because of it. And it's our prayer that God will work in our midst, that we will understand what He is saying to us.

So it's Matthew chapter 6 from verse 19. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. As I said, I'd like to speak about that which so often trips up a Christian.

Someone who is a believer eventually loses his faith and backslides. Here the heading is treasures or riches. Jesus was addressing his disciples.

And he started his sermon as it starts in Matthew 5. People had gathered and then his disciples were together and then he spoke. And some may say but this word is directed at the inner circle of disciples or at preachers. Ministers of the gospel, those that proclaim the gospel.

But that's not the case. It's not restricted to them. Because every Christian should in fact be a disciple of the Lord Jesus.

Sitting at the Lord's feet daily listening to his instructions that the Lord may teach him. Teaching each one what he expects of him, what he should do. Our text starts with the words, do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth.

If we have an ear to hear, this word sounds like thunder. Many people will end up being condemned, end up in hell because of this word that we've read. You may never have been immoral in your life, you may not have committed other sins.

But for this sin you will end up in hell if you commit it. If Jesus says love your enemies or he says do not steal or do not commit murder and you do one of those things or don't obey one of those things, you'll end up in hell. And yet if you keep all those other things but you break this command, this instruction, you will be as guilty.

That's why I say it's like a bolt of lightning. It's a very difficult command of the Lord. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth.

If you're concerned about money, that's your sole aim in life is to build up something for yourself here on earth. If that's all your life is about, you're on your way to hell. That's why young people they leave school.

People, young people leave school, they go to the cities. What's their aim? Their sole aim is just to make good money. And those children, they end up on the wrong road.

They are lost. Don't think that they're on the right road. We need to take very seriously the words of the Lord Jesus where he said to those parents, the mothers, don't cry for me, cry for yourselves and for your children.

Maybe you're happy because your child has a successful career, it's getting places, earning good money. But don't rejoice for that can be the obstacle stopping it from growing spiritually. So that's the first point.

Laying up for yourselves treasures on this earth. And then the Lord continues to tell us why. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.

You know a moth? You even know these little fish moths which you get that go into clothing and when you look again you see all your clothing has holes in it. Someone overseas once gave me a wonderful jacket, an expensive one. These days it was cold, I wanted to wear the jacket, when I wanted to put it on and I got it out, I found it had full of little holes because of being eaten by a fish moth.

There were two girls who received an inheritance, a huge inheritance. And a lot of what they received was very expensive clothing. So they divided the inheritance equally among them.

A while after that one of the sisters went to the other one and said, I've experienced something terrible. When I opened the box where I had kept all my clothing in, I found that the clothing had been eaten by moths. She said most of my clothing I've had to just throw away because I couldn't use anymore because of the damage.

The sister smiled and said I really feel sorry for you, you've really lost so much. And she said she had looked after them and even taken them out just to hang them out in the sun, but then she found that the

clothing had been eaten. But the sister said I'm very fortunate because I tried harder than that and so my clothing is still in perfect condition.

And she said but how did you get it right? What did you use? She said no, well you know what I did my sister, when I got my inheritance I took two or three of the dresses and those I kept, but the rest I gave away to the poor. And the other sister had to admit that her sister had done the wiser and the better thing. She said I tried to store up my things and to keep them, but now I've lost it all.

The first sister said you see when I got the inheritance I prayed about it and I asked the Lord what I should do. And that's what he showed me, that I should give it to the poor and so it was put to good use, but you obviously wasted your inheritance. Now that first sister, what she did, her action will have eternal value because that will be recorded in heaven.

Now that first sister, what she did, her action will have eternal value because that will be recorded in heaven. Just look at your wardrobe, what is in there? Maybe you're also storing up things and it's full from one side to the other and you're just storing it there. But those things will have temporary value and they'll be eaten eventually and have absolutely no value.

They won't have eternal value, but if you do what Jesus tells you, then it will have eternal value. It speaks here of the moth that destroys, but also of rust. You know what rust does? If you take metal and it rusts, it just deteriorates.

And maybe you just build on your riches, you trust your riches and you don't realize that they will just rust and go to nothing. You take your money, you save it, you put it away, no one must touch it, it's just for you. You've got your own ambitions with it.

If you've got five rand, you're not satisfied, you want twenty. If you've got twenty, you want more. If you've got a hundred, you want a thousand.

They once asked a millionaire, but that's not like today's millionaires because today it's not so much, it doesn't take much to be a millionaire, especially if you're in Zimbabwe, you just buy a loaf and it costs about a million already. So they asked this millionaire, in those days it was quite an achievement to get a million, and they said, look, what does it feel like to have your first million? Those were the days when a cow cost five rand. So a million was a lot of money.

And this millionaire responded by saying, well, after I got my first million, I wanted my second million. We have honour. Lying up treasures.

Some men don't even care for their wives. They put away every cent. They don't give one cent to the wife or to the children.

Do you think you're going to heaven? I don't know whether you'll even get there. Even if you do, you lose God's glory. You're storing up treasures for yourself.

That's all you think about. You're selfish. You want to just build up this empire for yourself.

You care about nothing else. You will lose God's blessing. And then you build up treasures and the Lord says, if you do that, thieves will come and they'll steal it.

And there are many thieves around nowadays. People who are like agents or angels of hell. The demons drive them to do this.

They go and they steal. They take away what you've got. And if you have attached your heart to those riches, because you're storing up riches for yourself, you will be depressed because of it.

And your whole life will collapse and crumble because your whole life you've built around it. Don't lay up treasures for yourself here on earth. This is an instruction.

If you obey this, it will bring you life. If you disobey it, it will destroy you. But then the Lord says, but lay up for yourself treasures in heaven.

And these two sisters, the one did exactly that by doing what the Lord told her to do it. And so she was storing up treasures in heaven by what she did. Because what you store up in heaven, what's stored in heaven cannot be destroyed by moth nor rust or be stolen by thieves.

Because giving is more blessed than receiving. So by giving you are blessed. You receive a blessing and even spiritually you benefit by it.

There's a story which is told, an old story, that a very wealthy man died. Now not far from him lived a very poor man. The rich man lived in a house that was like a palace, whereas the poor man lived in a hovel.

It was like a shack. And when he got to heaven, he was approached by Peter. And Peter showed him around in heaven, showing him the mansions up there as the Lord has promised that he will go and prepare a place for us.

They got to one mansion, it was absolutely beautiful. And the man said, who does this belong to? And Peter said, you know so and so, he is living there. And the rich man recognized that that was the poor man that had been his neighbor on earth.

And he said, no, that's a mistake. That man has never lived in a mansion like that. He won't know how to look after a place like that.

He'll get lost in it. But then he comforted himself with the thought that, well, if the poor man gets such a mansion, then he would be getting a fantastic place. But then they went on and they found a small little house.

The rich man said, well, whose house is this? And Peter said, it's yours. And he said, no, this is impossible. It can't be.

And Peter said, no, it is so, because remember when you lived on earth, you lived for yourself. You just enjoyed yourself together with your friends. But that poor man, he was storing up treasures in heaven.

To be concerned only about material wealth, your earthly riches, and that's all you worry about. That's something from hell. Today you even find girls, 12, 13 year old girls selling their bodies in prostitution just to get money.

I once asked them how much money they earn. And they said it's 50 rand per person. Now I actually thought they would earn more than that, not just 50 rand.

And I said, is that all you get? I said, is that all you get for that? They said, well, it's not too bad if you think if we can service five men a day, it's 250 rand. And if it's 10, it's already 500 rand a day. And then the one said, well, there are of course days when they have no customers, where she gets no customers and she earns nothing.

And the other one said, well, that never happens to me. And they don't care who it is, where they come from, what race it is. It makes no difference.

They store up treasures, storing up treasures on this earth. And in their case, they will do it even if they have to sell their bodies. Now, a normal person would go off her mind if she had to live that kind of a lifestyle.

And being with so many men, but these girls, they use alcohol and drugs. So you parents need to be wide awake. Don't be fast asleep.

You need to know what your children are up to. Someone gave me this picture of this young girl. Even the hairstyle does its job.

And on there it says for sale, so you can buy her. Now there are people that think slavery is a thing of the past. Some people think apartheid was the worst type of slavery.

But some of these girls are exposed to slavery of the worst kind. The one girl, 12 years old, was sold for 750 Rand. And her owner has locked her up and brings customers to her that she has to look after.

And some don't do it because of that, but they are enslaved by the sin itself. And they sell their bodies voluntarily. Now those that have been sold to someone like that, they don't even get their 50 Rand per customer.

It's their boss or their owner that gets that money. But if you live that kind of a life, you want to walk around with a hairstyle like this for your reasons, then you will end up in that way. And it's not just because it's the trend or that's the latest fashion.

There's something behind it. There's a reason that you're doing it. Your motives.

You are proud. Your child has got a good job, earning a big salary, and you don't realize that it's not on its way to heaven. Now Jesus instructs us.

He says, do not store up for yourselves treasures here on earth. You are so disobeying God's holy instruction, His command, if you do it. Because money has become your idol.

Amen. Amen. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen There's a man that went from one church to the other, and wherever you got to, wherever it was, when the minister said something, he would shout out, Amen, Hallelujah, Amen, just at random, for any reason. And people like that don't realize what they're doing, because Amen is one of the names of the Lord. Yes, it also means, so let it be, so be it, but it also is one of the Lord's names.

And people who just use it indiscriminately, not even thinking about what they're saying, they are using the Lord's name in vain. And even some preachers do it, from the pulpit. Now, this man went around, this man went around calling out his Amens and Hallelujah, and it was very disturbing.

Some preachers actually had some difficulty preaching, because he was always interrupting. And then one minister said, well, I'll get him, because they knew that he was a very wealthy man. He said, now I know how I'll get him quiet.

And they said, well, how will you get it right? He said, just wait and see. Amen. Hallelujah.

And so the preacher started preaching, and he started his Amens and Hallelujahs and Glory to God. And then the preacher went to him, and he said, I realize that you love the Lord very much by always calling out during the sermon. He says, I see you love the Lord so much.

Could you please help and donate 10,000 Rand to the Lord's work? Suddenly the man stopped smiling, he stopped calling out Amen and Hallelujah. He started sulking. That shut his mouth.

He didn't call out another Hallelujah. See, he was just making a noise. All the time he was busy building up his own treasures here on earth.

His idol. When he was asked just to give 10,000 Rand of his riches, he was upset about it. So the word says, do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth.

Almost every person gives the Lord Jesus a slap in his face by disobeying this word. If you store up for yourselves riches, you're giving the Lord a slap in his face. They didn't just give him a slap when he was crucified.

You do it to this day because you disobey what he has told you. You can keep all the Lord's commandments, but if you disobey this one, you're on your way to hell unless you repent. I knew somebody, he's not alive anymore, but he was a wealthy man.

When he was on his deathbed, he called together his whole family, even the sons-in-law. And he said, my children, I want to confess my sin. I didn't live for God in my lifetime.

I just lived for my own treasures, building up my own treasures here on earth. That's what he said at the end of his life, admitting and confessing this sin, saying, I didn't live for God. I just lived for money.

But sadly, some of his children to this day are still busy storing up treasures and living for money. Now someone may get confused and say, well, what does this mean? Must I just then take my money and just give it all away? No. God has created everyone.

And some he has allowed to get rich, but others he has allowed to remain poor. He's made, he made everyone. But he doesn't want anyone to hold on to his riches.

Don't attach your heart to money, to earthly riches. If you do that, you may find that a prostitute will end up in heaven and you won't. But if you do that, you may find that a prostitute will end up in heaven and you won't.

But if you do that, you may find that a prostitute will end up in heaven and you won't. If you receive riches, if you receive an inheritance, or if you work and you earn money or if you plant something and you get a good crop, it's not a sin to receive money and to have money. You even find in the Bible there were many wealthy men like Job and Abraham.

They were blessed and they had earthly riches, but they didn't attach their hearts to these riches. Those riches didn't become their idol. If you have earthly riches, don't attach your heart to them.

Don't make those riches to become an idol to you. For you cannot serve two masters. You cannot serve God and mammon.

You are a liar if you say you love God, but you're living for your riches. I think it was just a week ago when I spoke about money and if you show a child money, how they attach value to money. If you show them a paper note and a silver coin, even though the silver coin may only be worth 10 cents and the paper note is worth a rand, they will take the silver coin because it appeals to them more.

Some children even collect stones and they hope that somehow this will, they may be something precious and you say to them, what are you doing? No, they're storing up treasures. And you smile at that child and say, it's just a child. But if you store up treasures for yourself here on earth, God won't smile at you and say, oh, it's just a child.

He'll say that is a fool. Now the apostle Paul also writes about riches which he had. Now, the riches he had weren't in terms of money, but he said his riches were his heritage, his culture, his tradition.

He was born of a Pharisee and those were all things which he regarded as something very important and which were gained to him. Until he met the Lord Jesus, then things changed and he said suddenly those things that had been gained to him, that had been important to him, were totally unimportant to him. And he said, now for me to be found in Christ, that is the most important treasure for me.

He counts for dung. Anything else, he regards as dung in comparison to the glory of knowing Jesus. Let me just use an example.

If you have a problem with your stomach or if you're sick, and he realizes I need to get to a doctor,

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net