**Sermon Title: Laying Up Treasure in Heaven**

**Revisiting Versus that we have Talked about Regarding Reward in Heaven Thus Far**:

**Beatitudes:** Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who morn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.

**5:12:** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**Conclusion**: Reward and all the blessings of the kingdom are for **those who humble their very attitudes of the heart and their spirit in obedience** to how God has called us to live in a hostile world.

**Jesus’ Ethical Teaching: Spirituality Starts from Within and then Moves to Action**

**5:19:** **19**Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

**Conclusion:** God will reward and call great **those who take serious Jesus’ teaching and the Bible**. Those who ***practice Jesus’ teaching***, and ***teach others*** to follow his teaching as well.

**Anger** - The issue is not murder but *anger*.

**Lust** – The issue is not adultery but *lust*.

**Divorce** – The issue is not divorce but *unfaithfulness to a vow* and its effect on another.

**Oaths** – The issue is not an oath but *integrity*.

**Retaliation** – The issue is not retaliation but *nonretaliation* and a willingness to go an extra step.

**Loving Ones Enemies** – The issue is not hate, even towards enemies, but *love*.

* As has already been stated, Jesus will **reward those who put into *action* His ethical teachings**.

**Jesus’ Teaching on Spiritual Disciplines/Practices:** Devotion with the Right Heart Motive

**Giving/Praying/Fasting** – All Spiritual Disciplines

* Do all spiritual disciplines in order to please God, not to be seen or noticed by others.

**V. 4**: **4**so that your giving may be **in secret**. And your Father who sees in secret **will reward you**.

**V. 6:** **6**But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is **in secret**. And your Father who sees in secret **will reward you**.

**V. 18:** **18**that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is **in secret**. And your Father who sees in secret **will reward you**.

**Conclusion:** God will reward our faithful disciplined living.

**Three Imperatives**

* In our text, and the following weeks text, there are three main imperatives, three commands — very happy commands. Everything else is meant to help you see the commands as wise and right and joyfully possible. The three commands are

1. “Lay up for yourselves **treasures in heaven**” found in verse 20 (I am lumping the negative command, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth,” together with this one as a negative way of saying the same thing).
2. “Do **not be anxious**,” found three times. Verse 25: “Do not be anxious about your life.” Verse 31: “Do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’” Verse 34: “Do not be anxious about tomorrow.”
3. “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness” found in verse 33.

**Important Sermon Point:** All or our preceding conclusions is very much a part of seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness!

* Furthermore, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness involves not trying to be rich on earth but trying to be rich in heaven, that is, rich in God. Seeking the kingdom, in a sense, means treasuring God and freeing yourself from the drag of earth.

**Principle to Live By**: The fruit of trusting Jesus as our Lord and Savior and treasure, is laying up treasure in heaven and not earth. It is a **radical freedom from earthly things** and earthly security, with a **joyful pursuit of God and his righteousness as our treasure**.

* This in a sense has to do with more than just possessions and money, because the poor need this exhortation just as much as the wealthy.

**Another Important Sermon Point:** Jesus is giving us wisdom from an eternal, preexisting, actually being God himself, perspective. **Prioritize gaining reward in heaven** far above focusing on the rewards and treasures of this world.

**Question Why**?

* This earth is temporary, while heaven, and the rewards in heaven earned, are eternal!
  + Evidently there are two ways to live: you can live with a view to accumulating valuable things on earth, or you can live with a view to accumulating valuable things in heaven.

**1 Corn. 9:24-27** 🡪 “…they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.”

**1 Cor. 3:9-15** 🡪 “each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it… the fire will test what sort of work each one has done… survives, he will receive a reward…”

**Laying up Treasure in Earth or Heaven**: You must Choose!

**V.24** “no one can serve to masters” “you cannot serve God and money”

* There is something about God and money that makes them tend to mastery. Either you are mastered by money and therefore ignore God, or you are ***mastered by God and make money a servant of the kingdom***. But if either tries to master you while you are mastered by the other you will hate and despise it. This is why Jesus said it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19:24). Much money makes a cruel master.

**Where your Treasure is, there your Heart Will Be: The Eye is the Lamp of the Body:**

* Just as the “heart” (v.21) forms the center of one’s affections and commitments, the “eyes” enable the whole person to see. **Good and bad eyes probably parallel a good and bad heart** and thus refer, respectively, to storing up treasures in heaven versus storing them up on earth as well. Similarly, the way people handle their finances affects every other part of their lives, either for good or for bad.