

Treasures in Heaven

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Date: 10 April 2016

[0:00] I know there's a saying that my dad's really fond of, and it's part of a poem.

I'm going to read that poem just to start our time together just now. Two little lines I heard one day, traveling along life's busy way, bringing conviction to my heart and from my mind would not depart. Only one life will soon be passed. Only what's done for Christ will last. Only one life, yes, only one. Soon will its fleeting hours be done.

Only what's done for Christ will last. Only one life, a few brief years, each with its burdens, hopes and fears, each with its days I must fulfill, living for self or in his will.

Only one life, which will soon be passed. Only what's done for Christ will last. When this bright world would tempt me sore. When Satan would a victory score.

[1:53] When self would seek to have its way. Then help me Lord with joy to say. Only one life, which will soon be passed. Only what's done for Christ will last.

O let my love with fervor burn. And from the world now let me turn.

Living for thee and thee alone, bringing thee pleasure on thy throne. Only one life, which will soon be passed. Only what's done for Christ will last. Only one life, yes, only one. Now let me say, thy will be passed.

Only one life, only one life, which will soon be passed. Only one life, which will soon be passed.

Only what's done for Christ will last. Only one life, yes, only one. Now let me say, thy will be done.

And when at last I'll hear that call, I know I'll say, it's what's worth it all. Only one life, which will soon be passed. Only what's done for Christ will last.

[3:04] And when I'm dying, how happy I'll be if the lamp of my life has been burned out for thee.

So said Charles Thomas Studd. Charles was born into a wealthy family in England. And when just 16, he put his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He became a cricket player with worldwide fame. But Charles realised that he did not want to pursue such a career. He said about his decision, I knew that cricket would not last.

And honour would not last. And nothing in this world would last. But it was worthwhile living for the world to come. Yeah, the world to come.

He took an eternal perspective. He chose what was worthwhile. And he was motivated by a desire to glorify the Lord, no matter the cost. Studd left England to serve as a missionary in China with Hudson Taylor.

[4:13] And he explained it this way. He said, Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bell. I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell.

This former cricketer, he spent a decade in China. Much of that time working in a rehab centre for opium addicts. Sharing the gospel. And seeing lives transformed by God's saving truth.

And while he was in China, his father died and left him a large inheritance. But rather than keeping it, he immediately gave it all away. To support ministries like those of George Mueller and D.L.

Moody.

Getting the gospel out there. Charles and his wife and four daughters moved to India, where he pastored a local congregation for seven years. He struggled there with asthma.

Often staying awake many nights. Not finding it easy to breathe. But he faithfully preached the gospel there. In India.

[5:21] And many were converted to Christ. Then Charles says to call to another land. To Africa. The innermost jungles. To the Belgian Congo.

It wasn't easy for him. At one point he had a severe case of malaria. Another time he woke up in the morning to discover a poisonous snake had been sleeping by his side all night long.

Charles worked in the heart of Africa. Bringing the gospel to tribes that had previously never heard of the name of Jesus. They'd never heard that name.

He wrote over 200 hymns. Translated the New Testament into native language. And saw thousands of African people turn to the Lord. C.T. Stubb died in Africa.

At the age of 70. Having spent most of his adult life in missionary service. 10 years in China. 7 years in India. 20 years in Africa. It was hard pioneering missionary work.

[6:25] And Charles Stubb had a simple and sincere conviction. If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.

What of us? Where is our treasure? Where is our treasure? Matthew 6 verse 19 it says, Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Notice that. Treasures in heaven. Where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

Verse 21. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. It's been said that this speaks really of the only bank that's fully insured.

You know, you can put your money into banks, but this is fully insured. There's no lack of assurance to this deposit.

[7:49] And so, do we hold tight to this world? Grasp it and hold it in our grip? Or do we care about what will last? What will truly last?

What is forever? Our relationship with God. And how we can live and serve Him, and bless Him, and for Him to use us to bless other people. This world is not our home.

It's not. 2 Peter 3 verse 11. It tells us, We are saying then that all these things shall be dissolved.

What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?

What manner of people should we be in a world that's going to be dissolved? This is not our home.

What manner of persons ought we to be? C.T. Studd had that kind of eternal perspective, didn't he?

That he could see beyond just the here and now, to the here after. There was a story about an American tourist who travelled to Poland one time, and he went to visit a religious leader there, a teacher who was known for his wisdom.

[9:01] And he went to this man's house, and as he walked in the door, he noticed that this man had just a simple room, nothing but a chair, a table, some books. And here was this visitor from the US, he knocks on the door, he walks in, he opens and sees this, and he says to the man, Where is your furniture?

And the teacher answered, My furniture? Where is your furniture, my friend? And the American protested, Furniture? I'm only a tourist passing through.

So am I, said the man. And so are all of us. He wasn't worried about having furniture. He had the perspective that he was only passing through.

And so are all of us. We're just passing through this world. And so we need to learn to loosen our grip on earthly things, on earthly possessions, and treasure that which matters.

What will we treasure? I say to you, treasure Christ. Treasure Christ. Lay up treasure in heaven.

You know, it won't matter what the interest rate does, if you've got heavenly treasure, will it?

[10:26] It won't matter if there's deflation, and you lose value in what you own. No things are going to break through and steal. There's going to be no corrosion problem. No corruption.

No bushfires. Our treasures are securely guarded in his hand. In 1 Peter 1, 3-4 it says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again, unto a lively hope.

It's a living hope. We're alive. We're free. We've got a hope beyond this time. Here below. It goes on, By the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.

What a blessing to know, there's a reservation being made, as you've trusted Christ here below. A reservation is made. A name is written in his book. It all boils down to this.

Where is your heart? Where is your heart? For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. [11:46] For where your treasure is, there is your heart. You know, just yesterday, I stood by the bedside of one of our church folk, a lady who's snobbing at Orwell, and she was hooked up to all kinds of electronic gadgetry, measuring her blood pressure and pulse and heartbeat and such.

You name it. And there was that machine, as you can see, the sign of the heartbeat, as it were. But only God can see into your heart.

Amen. Only God can see the state of your heart, with his x-ray vision. As he searches, as he tries the heart, the reins, the guiding principles of your heart.

To know what you are made of. Only God can see, right through to the very heart, to the very core of you, and he knows what you're made of. He sees it. And as someone has observed, the heart is a movable object.

The heart is the control centre for life. It says in Proverbs 4.23, Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.

[13:00] Watch over your heart, it's telling us. Watch it. Guard it. Keep it. What is your heart devoted to? How is your heart? Who has the mastery over your life?

Put God first with your life, with your use of money, of time, of your life, of your substance, with what you devote yourself to. Invest your life in this, to maximise your life to God's will, to do God's will.

We see in the word, many examples. And one example is Achan. He had an Achan heart. Wasn't a good kind of heart to have, but Achan.

In Joshua 6 and 7, we read of how, the Lord told the children of Israel, to attack Jericho, and to abstain from the occurs of things, and to bring all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze into the treasury of the Lord, to consecrate what they gathered to the Lord.

And as they attacked Jericho, one of the men disobeyed God's command. He saw some things he took a liking for. A beautiful Babylonian garment, 200 shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold that weighed 50 pounds.

[14:18] And he gathered these things, and he hid them in his tent. no one's going to notice this. But because of this man's sin, Israel was defeated at the battle of Ai. And this man was put to death because his heart coveted after the riches, instead of honouring the Lord, and doing as he had asked of him.

His heart was in the wrong place. The Lord Jesus told another story of a man who heaped up abundant treasures for himself. He decided to store up everything for himself.

This is Luke 12. It's a passage that's much loved by my wife because it was a printer who told this story that saw her turn to Christ. Oh, this man, he amassed this wealth, and then he laid back in his easy chair, as it were, and said, take it easy now.

Eat, drink, and be merry now. But then the Lord said, time's up. Time's up.

You're full. You're full. In that night, he lost everything, including his own life. And God called him a fool. The Lord was saying here in Luke 12, this is how it will be for those who store up things for themselves, but are not rich towards God.

[15:43] The Lord Jesus says in Luke 12, 15, Take heed, watch out, beware of covetousness, of greediness. For a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

It's not about things that you would possess, that is our true wealth. And sometimes we can get caught in that trap. But the Lord says that our life does not consist in this, the abundance of things that we have.

Think of your life. What really matters? What really counts? What is of true value? It lies in the person that we are. It's about who we are.

So let's not hold tightly to earthly things. Let's not put our trust in earthly wealth. If our treasure is on earth, we will experience much disappointment. Rather, set your affection on things above.

Think of the great treasures we have. Even the very breath that we breathe. The life that we live.

The health that we have. Such that it is. We've all got different capacities, different responsibilities.

[16:49] And the Lord says to us, we're called to manage these things that he's given to us. To manage that stewardship. To manage what he's given

into our hands, into our care. As his servants, as stewards.

And he wants us to be found faithful stewards. Have used wisely this time on earth, this earthly time span, this lifespan that we each have. Let's make our time on earth count.

So that there's an eternal benefit. It's what we are designed for. 1 Peter 2 verse 9. It tells of how we are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.

Why? That you should show forth the praises of him, who has called you out of darkness, and into his marvellous light. He wants us to show forth his praises.

In some churches in China, they welcome new believers by saying this to them. Jesus now has a new pair of eyes, with which to see.

[17:46] A new set of ears for listening. Two new hands with which to help. And a new heart for loving others. When he saves us, he gives us great opportunity.

There was a preacher called Truett. And this man Truett was invited to dinner in the home of a very wealthy man in Texas. And after the meal, the host had lavished this meal on Truett.

And they both went out to enjoy the view of the surrounding land. And this wealthy man, he pointed to their oil wells in the landscape. He said, 25 years ago I had nothing.

Now as far as you can see, it's all mine. And looking in the opposite direction at the sprawling fields of grain, he said, that's all mine.

Turning this other way, he showed huge herds of cattle. And he bragged, they're all mine. And then pointing here, he said, of this beautiful forest, that too is all mine.

[18:53] All mine. And he paused expecting this preacher Truett to compliment him on his great success. And Truett however placed one hand on the man's shoulder and pointing heavenward with the other, he simply said, how much do you have in that direction?

Ha, ha, ha. And the man hung his head and confessed, I never thought of that. Material wealth is temporary, but treasures in heaven are never lost.

So how can we have such treasure? Firstly, we must yield our heart to know Christ as our Saviour. Do you know the Saviour?

Do you know the riches in glory that are in Christ Jesus? Do you know the riches of a heart set free, converted, turned around, shaped for his glory as his vessel?

A heart that knows Christ as Saviour. Do you know the glory of a heart set free, and the glory of a heart set free. And then, invest your life in being a blessing.

[20:03] Invest in your character. Develop skills through education and learning. Learn things that you can use for God's service. Maybe you can learn a musical instrument. I was quite older in life before I took up a musical instrument.

It's one opportunity we could consider. Develop some abilities that you can use to serve God.

We've all got different ways we can serve. Different capacities.

Use your skills, your talents, for the glory of God. Use it for his glory. Put your faith into action. Be a witness for Christ amongst the people you meet.

Share your faith with others while you have time. It's only been said, it's been said that the only things that we can take to heaven with us are the souls that we've reached here below.

Amen. The people that we meet are more precious than the things of this earth. Invest in people, pointing them to the Saviour.

[21:06] Helping them to grow in their faith. Invest your life in what matters in heaven. This is what is important. What matters to God's heart. And there's a reward to come from a life so invested.

It can take just small steps sometimes. It all counts. It's amazing how in Matthew 10, 42, our Lord tells that even in the little ways we can bless others.

Just a cup of water. Yeah. Matthew 10, 42. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple.

Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. Just a cup of water. It's something very simple. Yet the Lord Jesus says, such a work of kindness is important to God.

Think of how you can bless other people. There's a reward. The Lord Jesus says, this man shall not lose his reward. So nothing can take our treasure away.

their treasure is, isn't it?

[27:15] Preach it brother. It's where their treasure is. Some people obsess about their appearance. About their physical health. And they spend much time on that. You know, I've got to get to the gym tomorrow morning.

I mustn't miss that. I'll give church a miss. I've got time for that. But I won't miss the gym. It's what their treasure is, isn't it?

And it's all well and good to go to the gym. You can see what it does for me. That's why I've got such a physique. But it's nothing wrong with going down the gym.

Or getting some good exercise. But godliness is much more profitable for you. And so, some will be caught up in entertainment. And seeing the latest movies.

And going on trips. Or buying the latest gadgets. Or constantly updating their car. They've got to have the latest model. Or obsessed with their possessions. There's nothing wrong with possessions.

[28:13] But it's whether it's where your heart is, isn't it? That's the point. And it can show through. Where your treasure is can show through. In your conversation. What you're going on and on about.

What you're telling everybody about. It's what you're talking about the most. What you're thinking about. What you're worrying about. What's stopping you from going to sleep. What you're dwelling on.

What you're thinking about. Day after day. Night after night. What it is that you put your time into. Your energy into. What you set aside your time for. What is it that you will make a commitment to go to rain, hail, sleep or shine.

It's where your heart is. Where your heart is. You see some mad keen footy fans. Nothing wrong with footy. They would never dream of missing a match.

Never dream of it. It doesn't matter if it's the other side of the continent. They'll book their flights. They'll book their reservation. They'll book their accommodation. They'll fork out hand over fist.

[29:20] What it's going to cost them to go to this thing. They will spend heavily to go to the other side of the nation. To barrack for their team. Why? It's about the heart isn't it?

It's where their heart is. They'll go crazy when their team wins. But don't bump into them when their team loses. Because they will be in deep mourning.

Deep mourning. They'll be weeping tears of desperation every time their team loses a match. Why? It's because it's where their heart is.

How can we so invest in our lives that there will be treasure in heaven? In heaven. How can we look for ways to see our treasure stored there?

Look for ways you can engage in unselfish consideration of others. Amen. How you can employ your talents for the glory of God. How you can invest your soul.

[30:22] I know there's a young woman here who is telling me how she feels that God is impressing on her to undertake some Bible training. That's a blessed desire.

That's a blessed desire. That's a good desire. She wants to be better equipped to serve the Lord. It's where her heart is. And I commend her for that.

Invest in your soul. Invest in increasing your Bible knowledge. How do you spend your money? Use it wisely. Buy some good Christian books. Some good Christian materials that you can feed your soul with.

Invest in your church by supporting the meetings. By supporting the ministry. By taking an active part wherever you can. You know it blesses me when I have people say, Pastor I want to do more. Please tell me. I'm not holding you back. Invest in studying. Memorize Bible verses.

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[31:18] Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books.

Christian books. Use some good Christian books.

Use some good Christian books. Use some good Christian books. it's treasure in your heart. It's treasure in heaven. Invest in Bible training, Bible doctrine, Bible apologetics. In other words, so you can counter the false arguments of the false cults.

Invest in your children. Invest in your spouse. Invest in Christian education. In the decisions of life, do you consider the kingdom of God? Is that uppermost in your mind?

We have riches beyond compare. If we know Christ as saviour. It's been said that the real measure of our wealth is how much we'd be worth if we lost all our money.

[32:18] The real measure of our wealth would be how much we'd be worth if we lost all our money. That's the true value, isn't it? It's not money. It's not things.

We have this treasure in earthen vessels, earthly vessels. A heavenly treasure. And even in these weak, mortal bodies, frail and easily broken, such as they are.

And for myself, I can say, fallible, frail, at times very unworthy vessels for God's glory.

We have God's treasure. Amen. What a blessing that is. As someone has said, to have one's treasure in heaven means to submit oneself totally to that which is in heaven, God's sovereign rule. And there's a freedom there. This is not a bondage thing. To serve our king is a free and glad joy and privilege for us. To submit to his rule, which is not irksome, but sets us free.

[33:21] To come under his rule. To seek first the kingdom of God, we must first seek and come to know our heavenly king. It's knowing the king. Do you know him?

The king eternal. To know heaven's treasures, let's yield our lives into the hands of the king of heaven.

Yield your life to the king of heaven. Pledge your allegiance to him and him alone. Hold lightly to the things of earth, but tightly to the things of heaven. Turn your attention to heaven, let's people.

He speaks to us. Above all the noise sometimes. He says, be still and know that I am God. Above all the noise.

Now things can get so noisy, can't they? Travel on public transport and they've all got noise. Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. You walk down the street and the people wearing these things.

[34:23] Noise, noise, noise everywhere. Be still. And know that I am God. Hear his voice. Sometimes his voice can get crowded out with all the noise, can't it?

Even for Christians. We get so noisy in our lives. Treasures in heaven. Maybe it could mean sacrifice for you to put yourself out, to redirect some of your energy, as it were.

Instead of putting your energy into useless things, let's face it, put your energy into things that matter. Amen?

Redirect your energy. Redirect your time. Redirect your resources, your priorities. Make a sacrifice. It might mean you don't spend so much time on your stamp collection.

That's what happened to me. I put away childish things. They lost their appeal to me.

[35:35] They just gave it all away. It didn't matter anymore. Make a sacrifice and God will reward you for it. As Moses did in Hebrews 11. What happened to Moses?

It says that he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He esteemed the reproach of Christ's greater riches than the treasures of Egypt that he left behind.

For he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. He saw the reward. He left Egypt and he went with God's people. He left the palace and came into the work of a slave.

He left the comfort and ease of Pharaoh's camp and he identified himself with the people of God. He chose the greater riches than the treasures of Egypt which speaks of worldly wealth and occupation.

1.26 tells us to not trust in uncertain riches. What are we investing our lives in? We reap what we sow. We can give cheerfully. Friends, knowing that what we invest in heaven will always bear fruit.

[36:53] Amen. It will always abound. Now, I don't talk about giving so much in this church. I don't want to browbeat people with such things.

We give freely because we've received freely. And as we give, we receive his blessing. But I'm talking more than just money.

Money's just one tangible representation of us, isn't it? It's about the whole of you. It's all of us. It's our whole being.

It's who we are. It's the person that we are. Place that on the altar. Place that on the altar and all that you have, all that you are. 2 Corinthians 9, 6 to 8, Paul says, But this I say, He which sows sparingly shall reap sparingly.

He which sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Verse 7, Every man according to, as he purposed within his heart. There's that word again. The heart. It's about your heart purpose, isn't it? [37:57] As you purpose in your heart. So let him give. Not grudgingly or of necessity. For God loved a cheerful giver. It's a decision of the heart.

If you're on the altar, he's got your heart, hasn't he? It's about getting on the altar, isn't it? And he has your heart there. He has all of you. All that you are, all that you earn, all that you own. Your whole life. The whole person that is you. It's a heart decision. And verse 8, And God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

Friends, there's a reaping time. But at the moment, it's sowing time. At the moment, it's planting time. One day we'll see the harvest. We may not see it for some time. One day we'll see the reward. Every man has to make a choice now how he will give. How he will invest his life, his labours. His substance, his person. Every man, how?

[39:02] As he purposeth in his heart. It's about how you purpose in your heart. For where your treasure is, then will your heart be also. You've only one life. One life.

It will soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last. Only that. Where's your treasure today? Where's your treasure today? Saint, where's your treasure?

If you're not a Christian today, find your treasure in Christ. Make Christ your treasure. make him the one who gave his all for you so that we can know his abundance, so that we can know his freedom, so we can know his forgiveness, so we can know eternal life beyond compare.

Where? And eye has not seen, nor has the ear heard, neither have they answered. It's the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for them that love him. Where's your treasure? I pray it's in heaven.

I pray your treasure is in heaven, that you know Christ as your Master, as your Lord, as your Saviour. You know his saving love that bled and died and gave his all, his last breath on the cross for you.

[40:22] Died, buried, risen again, ascended and coming again. The ever-living Saviour. And here's our treasure. And it says that Christ can come and dwell in our hearts by faith.

I know some might question this asking Jesus into your heart kind of mantra, mantra, but there is truth to that, that Christ can dwell in your hearts by faith.

Wow. Heaven's throne and human hearts are his dwelling place. Is Christ in your heart? Do you know the King of Heaven?

Is he the King of your heart? I pray, I urge you to make that step of faith, to trust him, to call on his name. Turn from your own waywardness and turn to his life and peace and salvation.

I invite anyone who doesn't know Christ today to make that step of faith. Yes. We can open this front row here as we close with a song and invite you forward to come and sing prayer.

[41:29] You might say, I'm not sure I'm a Christian. I don't know that I'm going to heaven. Amen. You might say, Preacher, I want to know today. I want to know today. Come forward at the opportunity to do that.

You might be a Christian and you say, I'd like some prayer. There's some things going on. Then you can do that too. I'm sure we'll have brothers and sisters who can pray man for a man, woman for a woman and pray for you.

Just those that feel led can do so to assist at this time. Where's your treasure? I urge you to make a wise investment. Only one life. Use it wisely.

Sister, use it wisely. Brother, place your treasure in heaven in the king of heaven's hands. Let your life be at his disposal. Just like CT stud.
There's opportunities to be used of God. Let's not hold back. Where is your treasure?
[42:29] Let us pray.