

Storing Up Treasures in Heaven

Matt 6:19-21

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.

Jesus teaches in His sermon on the mount, that we should store up treasures in heaven because it is the safest investment you can make.

Jesus says we should not set aside treasures here on earth because it is a risky business. Your money, your riches, your investments are always at risk. Moth destroys, rust destroys, and thieves will steal your money.

Think about it...

1. If you place your money in the stock market... you are depending on the health of the stock market. People have made a lot of money, but also have lost a lot of money overnight. No one can predict the stock market.
2. If you invest in real estate, you can make a lot of money, but you also can lose your investment. If you have rental properties, people can stop paying rent and the government can prohibit you from evicting them.
3. You invest in gold or in silver, or bitcoin... the same thing, the value is volatile.
4. If you place it under the mattress, you can have people steal it. Or even if you have it in bank accounts, swindlers can scam you. How many companies and individuals have gotten money stolen from scammers. Or if you keep your money in a savings account, your money loses value over time.

Jesus said, metal rusts, wood decays, precious metals get stolen. There is no sure investment here on earth. The only sure investment is to place it in heaven.

What did Jesus mean about this?

Is there a bank in heaven?

Is there a heavenly bitcoin investment?

Is there a Fort Knox in heaven guarded by Angels?

The bible is clear about money.

You cannot take to the afterlife. When you die, all your wealth stays behind.

Job 1:21

And he said: "**Naked** I came from my mother's womb, and **naked** shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD."

1 Timothy 6:7

For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out.

We only manage wealth. It is not ours. We didn't bring anything into this world, and we can carry nothing out.

Like the little chick, it came out of the egg with nothing. We come from our mothers' womb with nothing. We may work and make a lot of money, we may inherit wealth from relatives who worked for it, but at the end of our lives we have to pass that wealth to someone else.

But Jesus said: "send it to heaven".

Jesus tells us the only treasure you can count on, is the one you sent ahead to heaven.

What does he mean?

Jesus said this about His mission:

Luke 19:10

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

The Kingdom of God is about saving people. When you belong to God's kingdom, your purpose in life, your aim in life, your goal is saving people. Your worry about people and not things.

The pagans, the people of the world, worry about:

*What am I going to eat?

*What am I going to wear?

*What mall am I going to go shopping?

*What car am I going to drive?

*What restaurant am I going to eat?

*What jewelry am I going to put on?

*What house am I going to live and how am I going to furnish it?

Most of the people, all they worry about is material things. And the bible tells me that God knows my needs and he will supply all my needs. I should not worry about those things.

I need to worry about the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to me.

The kingdom of God is about saving people.

John the Baptist was a simple man who knew what the kingdom of God was all about. Preaching repentance and baptizing people.

Jesus was a simple man who didn't have a home, or not even a little condo in a trendy neighborhood in Jerusalem.

Jesus preached repentance and He baptized people. (Not Him but His disciples).

Noah invested all his wealth to build an ark and to preach repentance.

Elijah was a simple man who preached repentance and was interested in people.

Zechariah 7:4-6 (in the Message Bible Translation)

GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies gave me this Message for them, for all the people and for the priests: "When you held days of fasting every fifth and seventh month all these seventy

years, were you doing it for me? And when you held feasts, was that for me? Hardly. You're interested in religion; ***I'm interested in people.*** MSG

The kingdom of God is about saving people.

The treasure you can send to heaven is investing my money in people... So that they can experience salvation.

The story of Zacchaeus is the context when Jesus told His mission: **"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."**

Look at what happens when Jesus comes into Zacchaeus' life:

Luke 19:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ² A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³ He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

⁵ When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.' ⁶ So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

⁷ All the people saw this and began to mutter, 'He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.'

⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, 'Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.'

⁹ Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.'

The people in the bible who were all in, who were 100% dedicated to God, their lives were not about money, not about coveting. Their lives revolved around saving people. Not about being rich.

Job didn't commit suicide when he lost all his wealth like some rich people who lose all their investments. He said: "The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD." Job 13:15 "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

Job's life was about serving God and not about money. He was very rich, but his life was not about riches. Over and over again the book of Job talks about how Job helped the poor and the destitute.

Sadly, the Bible tells us that there are God fearing people who their lives are all about acquiring wealth and coveting.

1 Timothy 6:8-10

Now godliness with **contentment** is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these **we shall be content**. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have **strayed from the faith** in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Some people think this passage is talking about pagans. But this bible verses are talking about Christians. Because the love of money and greediness some "**have strayed form the faith**". This passage tells us that because of covetousness (the love of money) Seventh-day Adventists, will lose their eternal life.

4 stories in the bible who because of the love of money they lost their eternal life:

1. Judas Iscariot.
2. Ananias and his wife Sapphira.
3. Achan
4. The Rich Young Ruler

Judas Iscariot

- ▶ Judas betrayed Jesus because love of money.
- ▶ Judas had a problem with Greed. He was not happy with what he had.
- ▶ Look at what the gospel of John says:

John 12:3

Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

John 12:4-5

But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵ "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?"

John 12:6

Judas did not really care about the poor. He asked this because he carried the moneybag and ***sometimes would steal from it.***

- ▶ Judas saw Mary Magdalene pouring out this very expensive perfume... and he complained about the waste.
- ▶ By the way... how did Judas know it was a very expensive perfume unless he had already smelled it and coveted before.

Luke 22:3-6

Then Satan entered the heart of Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve apostles. ⁴ Judas went to talk with the chief priests and the officers of the temple police about how he could help them arrest Jesus. ⁵ They were very pleased and offered to pay Judas some ***money.*** ⁶ ***He agreed*** and started looking for a good chance to betray Jesus...

- ▶ The Question of Malachi: "Will a man rob God?

Yet you have robbed Me!

- ▶ Judas was robbing God because he was taking what belonged to God and using it for himself.

Ananias and his wife Sapphira

Acts 5:1-3

Ananias and his wife Sapphira also sold a piece of property. ² But they agreed to cheat and keep some of the money for themselves.

So when Ananias took the rest of the money to the apostles, ³ Peter said, "Why has Satan made you keep back some of the money from the sale of the property? Why have you lied to the Holy Spirit?"

- ▶ The Question of Malachi: "Will a man rob God?"

Yet you have robbed Me!

- ▶ Ananias & Sapphira took something that belonged to God.

The Sin of Achan

Most of the time, people think that when the Israelites invaded Jericho, they were supposed to kill everybody and, destroy and burn everything. But that is not what the bible says. The bible tells us that they were supposed to take all the valuables and be part of the treasury of God. Look at what the bible says in Joshua chapter 6:

Joshua 6:18-19

And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. ¹⁹ But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, **are consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.**"

The Israelites were supposed to get all the valuables and bring them to God's treasury. But look at what Achan did.

Joshua 7:20-21

Achan answered Joshua and said, "Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and this is what I have done: ²¹ When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, **I coveted them and took them.** And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it."

What a sad story. Someone who lost their eternal life because of the love of money.

▶ The Question of Malachi: "Will a man rob God?

Yet you have robbed Me!

▶ Achan was stealing from God's treasury.

▶ When you keep tithe and offerings you are taking from God's treasury.

The Rich Young Ruler

The story of the rich young ruler is a sad story. He was a good "Seventh-day Adventist". He was a Sabbath keeper, he kept all the commandments, he returned a faithful tithe and he followed all the dietary laws; but **his problem was the love of money.**

Matt 19:16-19

Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

So, He said to him: "if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

Matt 19:20-22

The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have **treasure in heaven**; and come, **follow Me.**" But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

The sad thing was that Jesus was asking him to join Him in His ministry to save souls. The words "follow me", Jesus used for people He asked to be His disciples.

Matthew 9:9

As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "**Follow Me.**" So he arose and followed Him.

The Rich Young Ruler had the opportunity to be part of God's followers to send his "treasure to heaven"; the opportunity to invest in what God views as real treasure, **PEOPLE**.

Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Jesus paid an infinite price for our salvation. Not with silver or gold. This is what fisherman Peter says, (the one who left everything for Jesus):

1 Peter 1:18,19

Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, **like silver or gold**, from your vain way of life you received by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the **precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

The only thing we can take to heaven is people. We cannot take silver, gold, bitcoin, stocks, bonds, houses, cars, furniture or my iPhone. The treasure you can take to heaven is souls for God's kingdom. When you use your wealth to save souls, you are placing your treasure in heaven.

This is what Ellen G. White said about what Satan's plan is your wealth:

Counsels on Stewardship, p. 154

Go, **make the possessors of lands and money drunk** with the cares of this life. Present the world before them in its most attractive light, that **they may lay up their treasure here, and fix their affections upon earthly things.**

Counsels on Stewardship, p. 154

We must do our utmost to prevent those who labor in God's cause from obtaining means to use against us. **Keep the money in our own ranks.** The more means they obtain, the more they will injure our kingdom by taking from us our subjects.

Counsels on Stewardship, p. 154

Make them care more for money than for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom and the spread of the truths we hate, and we need not fear their influence; for we know that every selfish, **covetous person will fall under our power, and will finally be separated from God's people**

This is what a Christian writer says about my stewardship of money:

Randy Alcorn

"Abundance isn't God's provision for me to live in luxury. It's His provision for me to help others live. God entrusts me with his money not to build my kingdom on earth, ***but to build his kingdom in heaven.***"

Conclusion

Jesus told us to store up our treasure up in heaven. That treasure He talks about, is people. When you place your tithes and offerings in the offering plate, or in the Adventist Online Giving, you are placing your treasure in heaven. Those funds are used to preach the gospel to all the world.

The Apostle John had a vision, and this is what he saw:

Revelation 15:2

And I saw *something* like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark *and* over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God

Revelation 15:3

They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:
"Great and marvelous *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty!
Just and true *are* Your ways,
O King of the saints!

Revelation 15:4

Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?
For *You* alone *are* holy.

For all nations shall come and worship before You...

Meditate on this:

One day, everybody here in this church, will be standing on a sea of glass. And will sing the Song of Moses, but not only you... but millions upon millions of people who you helped to make it possible to be standing with you. Tithes and offerings is not about money, is about God's treasure; God's inheritance is His people. I invite you to store your treasure in heaven.