

## Store Up Treasure in Heaven

✦ **One Master (vv.19-24)**

✦ **No worries (vv.25-34)**

In the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, faithful stewards, managers of God's gifts:

Not so many years ago a dear daughter of mine came to me with a problem. "Dad, next year I'll be a junior which means internships, but I have no way to get to them. I need transportation." So I asked her, "Have you spoken to your heavenly Father about that? Because your earthly father cannot afford to buy you a car." "No, I guess I hadn't thought of that," she answered. God heard her prayers and mine. A few weeks later out of the blue a friend asked, "Do you know anyone who wants to buy a car? Mine won't start. I'm going into the military. I just need to get rid of it." Dented door, needed cleanup, but my daughter's boyfriend, now our son-in-law, had the fuse in his parts supply to start the car. Must be about 70,000 miles on that car now. Not bad for a purchase price of \$350 – less than the cost of four truck tires!

Is that what one salesman called, "Car luck"? Was another college woman just lucky to win a car in a raffle she did not enter, but with a ticket given by her boss? Is that "car gods" as the same salesman said? Dear friends, we know better because the Master Mechanic of our souls is our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Do you "have not because you ask not?" Are you worried about your life on earth, forgetting the mansions waiting for us in heaven? **Store Up Treasure in Heaven.** We have...

✦ **One Master (vv.19-24)**

Remember the toys we'd argue about as kids? Way back when, it was the little red wagon or that cool scooter with the hand pedal and turning wheels. My son spun around in his little yellow hot wheels. Now the neighbor kids have powered cars and small snowmobiles that run the yards for hours. But what do those tiny tot toys matter to teenagers and grown-up kids who want real power to ride the trails? Like kids' toys is how the best of earthly machines will look from our new home in heaven. So ***"do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."***

Since that's the case, how do we ***"store up for [ourselves] treasures in heaven"***? To start with we all need a new pair of eyes. Spiritually speaking, we're all cross-eyed as I was at age two. One eye went this way, the other that way. Finally an operation cosmetically corrected me, but I still see with just one eye at a time. Strangely, my stepfather, with no biological connection, has similar optics. Working in a lumber yard he liked to toy with customers who never really knew if he was looking at them. Add to wandering eyes some astigmatism and stress of age, these eyes just can't see the fine details of notes I wrote years ago or carving I'd like to do now. Worse yet, our souls are completely blind.

So our Lord and **One Master** says, ***"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"*** The physically blind can learn to do remarkable things without sight. Your eyes may no longer see in 64ths for cabinetry, but your fingers can tell closer tolerances than that. But with ***"bad"*** eyes on your soul, all the lights may be on, but nobody's home. Spiritually blind eyes can't see because the ***darkness*** inside is deep and profound.

***"No one can serve two masters. 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 both God and Money."*** The original word is

*Mammon*, the idol for “stuff,” all the extras you don’t really need. *Mammon* is what keeps the closet and cupboard doors from closing. *Mammon* is why stuff falls off of overloaded, sagging shelves. *Mammon* fills Minnesota garages so full with boats and collector toys we can’t park our cars inside. And Minnesota seems to have more three-car garages than most any state anywhere. But the worst problem with the idol *Mammon* is that blind eyes stuck on stuff cannot see God, cannot seek God, cannot find the way out of the junk pile of earthly goods. *Mammon* is a deadly false god that demands the sacrifice of your soul.

*Mammon* treats us all like monkeys. One science lab had trouble rounding up the monkeys. So a brilliant lab coat had a brainstorm. He got some large glass jugs with openings just big enough for a monkey to squeeze his hand inside. Then he put sweet jelly beans or shiny marbles inside each jug. In goes the hand but the monkey can’t pull it out again. He would have to open his hand and let go. It’s not so hard to catch a monkey with a huge glass jug stuck to his arm. And after *Mammon* catches all the monkeys, Satan rushes in to capture their souls. How will you ever fly up to heaven if your fist is stuck inside the jar of earthly things? My dear friends, Christian stewardship is not so much about money as it is about your good and welfare for time and eternity. How can God get you to let go for joy and...?

### ✦ No worries (vv.25-34)

Our gracious God does not treat us like monkeys. He did not leave us to evolve from slime or descend from apes and baboons. I can still picture the beautiful spot on the shores of a lake called the Sea of Galilee where Jesus preached His *Sermon on the Mount*. Our dear Savior would soon prove God’s love for us on the cross. But first He lifts our eyes above the glass traps to see our Father’s love. **“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?”** All your worrying and fretting about food and clothing is as useless as a fistful of marbles. While you and I worry about planes, trains and automobiles, the birds are flying high in God’s clear sky. God is their Creator, but He’s our heavenly Father, in a relationship closer than any earthly father could have with his own children. God gives you your body; won’t He help you clothe and shelter it? God gives you life; won’t He sustain it with food. God created your soul; won’t He bring you home to glory too?

Now look down and all around. **No worries** here either. **“See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.”** Look at the brilliant Fall colors. Same lesson. Those leaves are no more lasting than the stuff unbelievers crave. But the Master Artist makes them for our enjoyment. Won’t He also freely give us all we need for this body and life?

Here’s a plan to set you free. **“Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you as well.”** Focus on heaven through the cross of Christ. There His blood washed away all our sins of greed and materialism, worry and anxiety. In His resurrection we have the power to trust. Our God clothed us in His *righteousness* at our Baptism and keeps giving us priceless gifts of peace, hope and joy in His Holy Supper. Along with all these incomparable gifts of heaven come our earthly needs too. **“He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”** (Romans 8:32 NIV84) **“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”** Next week we’ll deal with those money troubles too as we **Store Up Treasure in Heaven**. Amen.

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