

## **STEWARDSHIP IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY – LESSON 2 (INVESTING IN HEAVEN) COLOSSIANS 3:1-3; 1 CORINTHIANS 4:2; MATTHEW 6:19-33**

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### **REVIEW:**

The apostle Paul wrote, “If ye then be risen with Christ (saved), seek those things which are above (eternal), where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection (your love and devotion) on things above (eternal things), not on the things of this earth” (**Colossians 3:2**). Not being of this world means we should be “dead” to all of its attractions, allurements, and ambitions. In other words, we should “set our affection on things above.”

The apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, makes it clear that for those of us who profess to be saved (“risen with Christ”), must “seek those things which are above.” In light of this fact, we should become “good stewards.” Of course, when we talk about stewardship we are talking about being faithful stewards of our time, our talents, and our treasures.

Regrettably, far too many professing children of God are more focused on that which is of this world not that which is of the next world. **NOWHERE IS THIS MORE EVIDENT THAN IN HOW WE DEAL WITH THE MATTER OF THE STEWARDSHIP OF OUR TIME, OUR TALENTS AND OUR TREASURES!**

### **Last week we consider the following points:**

1. As believers we are redeemed by the blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19)
2. As believers we belong to HIM (1 Corinthians 6:15-20)
3. As believers all that we do should bring HIM glory (1 Corinthians 10:31).
4. As believers we are to be faithful stewards of all that He has entrusted into our care (1 Corinthians 4:2)
  - This would include our time (Ephesians 5:17) and our talents (Matthew 5:14-30)

### **Read Matthew 6:19-33**

Last week we mentioned the importance of investing our time and our talents into the work of the Lord. This week we want to consider our treasures. It has often been said that one of the best ways to determine a man’s spiritual temperature is to check his giving statements. Our Lord, in this passage made some very strong statements:

### **Principles to Ponder:**

1. **In Matthew 6:19 we find these words, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth ...”**
  - *This seems to contradict all of what we have been taught most of our lives, especially here in America*
  - *This (“laying up for ourselves treasures on earth”) may be the American way, but it isn’t God’s way*
  - *God wants us to be a people who trust HIM (Psalm 37:3-7) not in our bank accounts*

**2. In Matthew 6:20 we find these words, “But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven ...”**

- God wants us to be a people who invest wisely
- There is no greater investment than an eternal investment (investing in the cause of Christ always pays great dividends)

**3. In Matthew 6:21 we find these words, “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”**

- While we all know the importance of loving God with all of our hearts (Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Matthew 22:37-38), many of us do not recognize the importance of investing our time, our talents, and our treasures into the person of Christ, the purpose of Christ, and of course the church of Christ
- If we want to grow in our love for the Lord and His church here in Long Beach we have to invest our treasures into the ministry

**4. In Matthew 6:24 we find these words, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”**

- Far too many of us are trying to prove Jesus wrong by trying to live for the things of this world
- It is time that we come to grip with the truth of Colossians 3:5, which reminds us that covetousness is as the sin of idolatry

*We have been brainwashed to believe that bigger houses, more prosperous businesses, and more sophisticated gadgets are the way to joy and fulfillment. As a result, **we are caught in an absurd, materialistic spiral**. The more we make, the more we think we need in order to live decently and respectably. Somehow we have to break this cycle ... One cannot read the Parable of the Rich Fool without thinking of our own society. We madly multiply sophisticated gadgets, bigger houses, fancier cars, and fashionable clothes – not because such things truly enrich our lives but because we are driven by an obsession for more and more. Covetousness, a striving for more and more material possessions, has become a cardinal vice of modern civilization.*

**-Ronald J. Sider, Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger**

*During the days of the Iron Curtain, a persecuted Romanian pastor said, “In my experience, 95% of believers who face the test of persecution pass it, while 95% who face the test of prosperity fail it.” This is what Thomas Carlyle meant when he penned these words: “Adversity is sometimes hard upon a man, but for one man who can stand prosperity, there are a hundred that will stand adversity.”*

*“What the Lions of Rome could not do to Christianity, materialism has done.” -Dr. William Grady*

*“Wherever true Christianity spreads, it must cause diligence and frugality, which, in the natural course of things, must beget riches! And riches naturally begets pride, love of the world, and every that is destructive of Christianity. Now, if there is no way to prevent this, Christianity is inconsistent with itself and, of consequence, cannot stand, cannot continue long among any people; since, wherever it generally prevails, it saps its own foundation.”*

**-John Wesley**

**5. In Matthew 6:33 we find these words, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”**

- God wants us to place the person (Colossians 1:18), purpose and principles (Colossians 3:15-16) of Christ first
- As those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, it might not be a bad idea to have a spiritual “check-up” and consider our priorities, not only for our giving, but for our living (see 2 Corinthians 8:5)