

Stewards of Grace

Overview

Section 1 A Divided Heart: competing loyalties & fear

Section 2 Giving First-Fruits: Trusting God for the Rest *[Next Week]*

COMPETING LOYALTIES

Section 1

(Matthew 6:19-24) Problem of competing treasures

(Mark 10:17-31) A case-in-point: rich young man

(Malachi 3: 6-10) A solution for being stuck

Primary Lesson: When faced with competing priorities, we'll follow our heart in the long run. Where is my heart set right now?

Matthew 6:19-21; 24

Lay Up Treasures in Heaven

¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters, for 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 God and money.

What is a "treasure" to me?

- *What do I value most?*
- *What would I most hate to lose?*
- *What do my thoughts turn to most frequently?*
- *What affords me the greatest pleasure?*

AW Tozer

Treasures on Earth	Examples of Laying up Treasures in Heaven
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweet, but don't last • Recognized & prized by the culture • Exalt self • Stoke Pride • Cannot keep them • Can bring enslavement • Define us to the culture • Here & now • What we can see • Sourced apart from God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generosity for God's sake <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time - Money - Possessions - Gifts - Creativity - Energy • Pursuing what matters to God • Forgiveness • Unconditional love • Renewing our mind & heart • Obedience & joy under God • Using financial resources for purposes that align w/ God's eternal purposes • Living sacrificially for Christ's sake • Giving sacrificially to the Kingdom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Churches ○ Pastors ○ Ministries • Serving God by serving the Body • Seemingly small acts of service that only God sees • Using my gifts for God's glory (not mine) • Seeking the praise of God, not men

Mark 10:17-22

The Rich Young Man

¹⁷ And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁸ And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.'" ²⁰ And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth." ²¹ And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." ²² Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Matthew 10:39

"Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life shall find it"

↙
clings to idols

↘
gives up idols

How to know I may have a false god (idol)

- Expect _____ to take care of me
- Suspect everything will be fine when _____
- Life only has meaning when _____
- I only have worth when _____
- Seeking _____ to meet deep needs for identity or security

Gauging the condition of my heart regarding financial giving:

- Did my possessions come from God's hand or my hand?
- Do I regularly give to the Kingdom? Why?
- If I don't regularly give to the Kingdom, why not?
- Do I strive for financial independence? Independence from Whom?
- Do I secretly believe that if I had more income I'd be happier?
- What has captured my heart lately?
- Am I storing up heavenly or earthly treasures?
- Am I possessed by my possessions?
- Is there any portion of my possessions "off limits" to God?
- What would it take to be giving sacrificially?
- Am I satisfied with God's provision?

Malachi 3:6-10 Robbing God

⁶“For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. ⁷ From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’ ⁸ Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. ¹⁰ Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. ¹¹ I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts. ¹² Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.

What does God want from His people?

What is God's solution to get His people back on track?

Why? How would this restore their relationship with God?

Why does God use the verb “rob” in vs 8-9?

For those struggling with anxiety over money & God's provision:

(Luke 12:22-34) Jesus explains why we should not worry about our provisions.

Primary Lesson: Anxiety comes from trying to provide for ourselves--forgetting the truth about God's sovereignty

Do Not Be Anxious

²² And he said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. ²³ For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. ²⁴ Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! ²⁵ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁶ If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? ²⁷ Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸ But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! ²⁹ And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. ³⁰ For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹ Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

³² "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Luke 12:22-34 (con't)

Jesus explains why we should not worry about our provisions:

Truths about God:

- God provides for everything & everybody
- God thinks I'm valuable (v24, 28)
- God knows what I need (v30)
- God gave me the Kingdom—with no regrets (v32)

Truths about myself:

- I cannot provide for myself, even in little ways (v26)
- I'm rich; been given the Kingdom (permanent riches v32)
- I can afford to give away possessions (v33)
- I can store up treasures in heaven (v33)
- Pagans worry, I don't (v30)
- I must determine where my heart is set (v34)

Truths about the world:

- Sets its heart on provisions (v22-23, 29-30)
- World's riches are temporary (v28, 33)