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Sermon Notes

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Storing Up Heavenly Treasure: Jesus Protects Us From Loss Matthew 6:19-24

I. A Remarkable Yearly Salary (Michael Jordan and Bill Gates)

Who Does Their Retirement Portfolio?? More importantly, who's handling yours?

II. Overview of Chapter 6

A. Unifying theme for entire chapter: Motivation

1. vs. 1-21 What motivates your religious life?? Praise from men, or praise from God
2. vs. 19-34 What motivates your physical life?? Desire for wealth and anxiety over basic needs? Or a desire for eternal heavenly rewards and confident faith in God's provision

B. Christ's constant concern: help individual Christian understand his/her heavenly Father

III. The General Principle: Be wise in how you store up treasure (vs. 19-21)

A. Negatively stated: Do not store up treasures on earth

B. Positively stated: BUT store up treasures in heaven

C. Underlying assumption: You're going to be storing up treasure somewhere

Matthew 7:24-27 "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.... But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on the sand..."

D. Supporting reasons

(NOTE Jesus' condescension here... he could just command us like a parent, and say "Because I said so!" But He is reasoning with us!)

1. The impermanence of earthly treasure

vs. 19 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.”

- a. moth and rust = inherent weakness of earthly treasures... susceptible to decay
 - b. thieves = inherent vulnerability of earthly treasures... an enemy can grab them from you (greatest enemy is death)
2. The permanence of heavenly treasure
- a. moth and rust = treasure is impervious to decay... incorruptible, imperishable
 - b. thieves = invulnerable to enemies, for there are no enemies in heaven

E. The Great Issue: The State of Your Heart

vs. 21 “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

- 1. What you value the most is what you will **think about**, what will **console** you when you are discouraged, ultimately what you will **worship**
- 2. The heart was meant for GOD... the heart is what God wants
- 3. Materialism and anxiety about basic needs robs the heart of joy and God of worship
- 4. Ultimately mammon comes to conquer and to rule... you cannot serve both God and money

IV. The Biblical Doctrine of Rewards, Both Earthly and Heavenly

A. Variety of Material Rewards

- 1. BMW motor car... “The finest engineered car in the world”
- 2. Spacious home

Illus. Newport Rhode Island... Gold bathtubs and diamond encrusted fireplaces; or Bill Gates’ home near Seattle... \$100 million dollars—stainless steel roof, heated driveway, electronic art gallery... “Lifestyles of the rich and famous”

- 3. Prestigious career... power over subordinates; company-owned jet, business trips to exotic places for high-level corporate meetings... notice that they always seem to go to resort areas to meet... never in places like Scranton, PA
- 4. Little (or big) perks in life...

Illus. Preference, by L’Oreal “I’m worth it!!”

B. Immediate Conclusion for Christian: Living for Rewards is Selfish

Jonathan Edwards resolution #22: "Resolved: To endeavor to obtain for myself as much happiness in the other world as I possibly can, with all the power, might, vigour, and vehemence, yea, violence I am capable of..." [Made when he was 20 years old]

1. BUT if living for rewards was intrinsically selfish, why would he command it of us?

Matthew 5:12 "Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven..."

Matthew 5:46 "If you love those who love you, what reward will you get?"

Matthew 6:1 "If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven."

Matthew 6:2, 5, 16 "Truly I say to you, they have received their reward in full."

Matthew 6:20 "Store up for yourselves treasure in heaven..."

Hebrews 11:6 "Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him."

2. Contrast is not between living a SELFISH life and an UNSELFISH life

3. NO contrast is between living a FOOLISH life and living a WISE life

Luke 12:15-21 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."¹⁶ And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop.¹⁷ He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'¹⁸ "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'²¹ "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

Illus. John Piper and the "art collector"

- C. Standard ways of looking at heavenly rewards

Illus. "I heard about a mansion he has built for me in glory; and I heard about the streets of gold beyond the crystal sea..."

Illus. My own calculations: Rev. 21:16, angel measured the New Jerusalem, 1400 miles wide by 1400 miles long by 1400 miles high... if there are 1 billion people saved, then each of us will get 2.7 cubic miles of room in the city... about 1.4 miles on a side... FOOLISH THOUGHTS...IDOLS!!!!

D. Biblical truth about Judgment Day

1. God WILL REPAY!!!! He is absolutely accurate and forgets nothing

Hebrews 6:10 "God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped His people and continue to help them."

- a. strong language... implies it would be unrighteous for God not to reward our loving service to Him
- b. actually a matter of covenant faithfulness... God promised rewards, and He will prove true to His word
- c. BUT all acts of righteousness actually God's own work in us

John 3:21 "Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

2. What does the Judgment Day reward look like? The opening of books and receiving of crowns!
 - a. books record everything we have ever said or done

Revelation 20:12 "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the great white throne, and the books were opened... The dead were judged by what they had done as recorded in the books."

- b. secret motives judged at that time

1 Corinthians 4:5 "The Lord will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God."

- c. quality of our work for Christ tested... if done for His glory to build His church, we will receive our reward

1 Corinthians 3:11-16 *For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.*

d. righteous acts woven together into a crown

1 Peter 5:4 *“When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of glory that will never fade away.”*

e. crowns cast down before the Throne

Revelation 4:10 *The twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say, ‘You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power...’”*

3. Greatest reward: our pleasure in Him, His pleasure in us!!

- a. what would you call an item that you place ultimate value on that has nothing to do with God? AN IDOL!!
- b. God would not make idolators out of us! Every reward actually tied to our love for and pleasure in HIM

Genesis 15:1 *“Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield, your very great reward.”*

- c. context... Abram refused to take part in division of material spoils after winning a victory with the King of Sodom
- d. central issue... every reward merely a channel of God's pleasure with us
- e. every act of service to God, he remembers and rewards with his smile, his words of approval, expressions of His love... all of those we gladly give back to Him as well

THE PLEASURE OF GOD IN US IS OUR ULTIMATE REWARD... our pleasure in God is His greatest glory

Matthew 25:21 *“Well done, you good and faithful servant... Come and share your master's happiness!!”*

E. Summary: Essence of faith is reward, essence of reward is God's pleasure

Hebrews 11:6 "Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek HIM."

1. Moment by moment, faith results in good works done for the glory of God
2. God treasures each one of these and holds onto them for us in heaven
3. He gives us the reward of His pleasure BECAUSE we seek HIM

V. The Danger of a Lost Reward: Materialism (vs. 22-24)

vs. 22-24 "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. 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! 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."

A. Is this warning for Christians?

1. Jesus was indeed speaking to His disciples... to those who are "spiritual beggars"
2. Terrible danger of materialism... living for the physical world, living for riches, comfortable houses, beautiful possessions
3. No reward from your Father in heaven... you will have wasted your time, your energies, your talents to gain possessions which you did not use for the Kingdom of God

B. Warning: Wasted Resources, Lost Reward

Illus. Rumpelstiltskin able to spin straw into gold...faith turns ordinary encounters into glorious riches for the Kingdom of Heaven

1. Everyone has gifts from God: physical strength, clear minds, time, energy... we use these to build, to store up, to make something of value
2. Materialism: cancer which sucks off resources meant for the Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew 13:22-23 "The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. ²³ But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

- a. the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth... Matthew 6:19-34
- b. choke it out, making it UNFRUITFUL... plant can't get water... the thorns sucked that up... plant can't get sunshine, the thorns blocked it out; plants can't get nutrients from the soil, because the thorns used them
- c. this is what selfishness and materialism does to the church... every day, God gives us **time**... do we use it to build His church, or for our own selfish ends? God gives us **talents**... what are we using them for? God gives us **money**... do we hoard it selfishly or give it away??

C. Christ's Answer: The Single Eye (vs. 22-23)

- 1. The image is of a concentrated focus... staring at one thing to accomplish it

Illus. Olympic archer... totally focuses his eye on the center of the target; if he allows himself to be distracted, he will fail to win the gold medal

- 2. Single eye here is like a single-minded man of James 1... thinking about only what will build the Kingdom
- 3. BUT if your eyes are bad, you are looking around at other things... anything that's beside the point of what God is doing in this world
- 4. The "eye is the lamp of the body" means the eye is what fills the entire body with understanding, purpose, determination... we get 70% of our information about the world through our eyes... if your eye is single, your whole body will be filled with light... totally motivated by God's will and God's wisdom
- 5. BUT if your eye is bad, you have nothing but darkness in you... and HOW GREAT IS THAT DARKNESS!!... Their minds are on earthly things and they are of no use to God

D. Christ's Answer: The Single Master (vs. 24)

- 1. Basic assumption: Human beings were meant to serve some master
- 2. We are so prideful, we think we can be our own master
- 3. BUT Romans 6 says we will either serve righteousness or sin; here, Jesus says we cannot serve both God and money... either way, you're going to serve some master
- 4. Core issue: HEART

Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other

- a. if you allow materialism to creep into your heart, you will someday abandon your first love
- b. you can only love one master... God was meant to fill our entire hearts

Matthew 22:37 “The first and greatest command is this; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

- c. God then makes a claim on your entire life... all your resources, all your time...etc.
- d. because we LOVE the master, the service is not burdensome
- e. ultimately both God and money forces a choice

“You cannot serve both God and money.”

Jesus says its impossible... you only have one life, and if your heart gets polluted with worldly things you will have very little to show for God on Judgment Day

VI. Application: **Stewardship of the Heart**

“Only one life, ‘twill soon be past... only what’s done for Christ will last.”

A. Christ’s Protection of Your Reward

1. **Judgment Day is coming very soon...** Jesus is laboring that none of His children will be **poor** of rewards on that Day
2. At the beginning of Chapter 6, **he protects us from hypocrisy...** good deeds done for earthly reasons
3. At the end of Chapter 6, **he protects us from materialism...** the squandering of your life’s resources for earthly, foolish things that you can’t take with you

B. Do an **inventory of your resources**

1. Time... day by day opportunities
2. Talents... personal gifts & abilities
3. Treasure... material resources (money)

C. Live For Eternal Reward: Build Christ’s Church

EVERYTHING OUR CHURCH DOES DEPENDS ON ITS PEOPLE GIVING SACRIFICIALLY OF THEIR TIME... if the members of FBC are poisoned with worldliness and materialism, the church will suffer from fruitlessness

Sunday school needs teachers and outreach coordinators; our **evangelistic outreach** depends on people willing to go out and meet people; our **discipleship ministries** for children and adults take time to do

Serving God in the local church may very well mean that you will make less money per year, live in a smaller house, that your kids will be involved in fewer worldly activities... and you would do this all to store up treasure in heaven where you would never lose it