

# The Pilgrim's Treasure

03 - The Pilgrim

Sunday, 17 March 2013 | Church on the Park

**Text:** “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 neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. “The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. “But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” (Matt. 6:19-24)

**Intro:** In the last two messages we have been focusing on our pilgrimage from this perishing world to God's eternal city. Our first message was *The Pilgrim's Purpose* and our last message was *The Pilgrim's Noble Birth*. Today, we will continue from where we left off last week and meditate on the pilgrim's treasure and relate this to our ministry of giving.

## 1) Our treasure as pilgrims is in heaven not on earth

- Jesus specifically exhorts us to store up our treasures in heaven.
- How is this possible?
  - 1) **Live with a different perspective.** We need to see that the things of this world are perishing and they do not have eternal value. Our focus should be on the eternal, the things not seen with the naked eye.
  - 2) **Be generous.** When Jesus says, “If your eye is good [clear, single] it's a Hebrew idiom for generous. If you are generous, you'll be storing up treasure in heaven. If your eye sees past the temporal into the eternal well-being of souls, and if you use your money for this purpose, you'll be storing up treasures in heaven. Money and stuff can't be lord over us, only God.
    - **Luke 16:1-13 - The Parable of the Shrewd Manager**
    - What is Jesus teaching us through this parable?
      - Who are “the friends”?
        - **To gain friends.** “Even as the dishonest manager used his master's money to gain friends, so Luke exhorted his readers to use their money similarly. The text does not make clear who these **friends** are, but if “they” will welcome the believers when worldly wealth no longer exists, they may refer to the **angels**; the **righteous poor** who are in God's presence (16:22); **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** (13:28); or this may be a circumlocution for “**God**.” The latter interpretation seems more likely. Regardless, the general sense is clear even if the meaning of “friends” is not. **Believers should so conduct their lives that when this world and its wealth comes to an end, God will**

**welcome them into his presence.”** (Stein, Robert H. Luke. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992.)

- This parable challenges us to **use our money** for **eternal purposes**, that is in the same way men like **Abraham, Isaac & Jacob** used their money.
  - We become friends with the saints of old and angels when we use our money and resources for eternal purposes.
  - **Abraham’s example** of tithing (Gen. 14:13-24). Jacob’s example: Gen. 28:10-22
- **The end of Pilgrim’s Progress**: Christian is eagerly welcomed into God’s eternal Kingdom, but Ignorance, though he knocked on the gates, is ignored (bottom of pg. 149-154)

## **2) It’s possible to lose sight of storing up treasures in heaven, causing detrimental effects on God’s house. (\*Neh. 13:1-13)**

- The people of Nehemiah **lost sight** of the importance of honoring God and his house with their labor, sacrifices and finances.
- Consequently, they **stopped tithing** and giving substantial offerings. This resulted in the **Levites** no longer being able to do the Lord’s work.
  - Today, **pastors** are like the Levites of old. (Paul himself makes this comparison in 1 Cor. 9)
- In contrast the example of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **Abraham’s example** (above)
- **In contrast** there was a time when the people of God did store up for themselves treasures in heaven. (**Exo. 36:2-7**)

## **3) God wants us to be like the Israelites of Moses day who gave abundantly to build God’s house and not like the Israelites of Nehemiah’s day who neglected God’s house (Exo. 36:2-7)**

- Here we read of a people who had **spiritual vision**, seeing the importance of God’s house.
- We too need to have this same vision and realize that God’s house today is not wood and curtains, but **people**.
- Giving is not **losing**, rather it’s **sowing**. Giving opens up the windows of blessings so that God can blow through and bless you.
- **Ministers must be empowered** to build up God’s house. **Jesus actually commanded giving to vocational ministers.** (1 Cor. 9:3-14)
  - Here Paul refers to the tithes and offerings of the Old Testament
- This means tithing is not **optional**, it’s **commanded**.
- Tithing 1) **Honors** God; 2) Is a tangible expression of **love** toward your pastors; 3) Ultimately **blesses yourself**
- **Fear** is probably the biggest obstacle to tithing an offerings. (Locked down in Queen St. because of gunman. Fear locks you in. Faith opens the windows through giving.)

**Conclusion:** Pilgrims have a heavenly perspective; they live for the eternal rather than the temporal. They are pursuing a heavenly city and want to take along as many as possible. Their heavenly perspective changes the way they use their money. They are committed to honoring God with their resources and making sure the house of God is well provided for.

## END NOTES

### IVP Background Commentary

“If laborers in secular occupations are paid, why not apostles?”

“9:8–10. Deuteronomy 25:4 was intended as a principle to teach that the laborer should be fed; here Paul may argue in the sense of the common Jewish *qal vahomer* argument: if for an ox, how much more for a person. Some Jewish teachers felt that God’s teachings about animals were only to teach people principles.”

“Priests and Levites were supported by the tithes of the people (cf., e.g., 2 Chron 31:4) but were also entitled to certain portions of the sacrificial food offered on the altar (like priests in many ancient pagan temples).

9:14. Here Paul alludes to a saying of Jesus (Mt 10:10; Lk 10:7; cf. 1 Tim 5:18).  
9:15–27<sup>1</sup>”

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<sup>1</sup> Keener, C. S. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament* (1 Co 9:13–27). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.