## **Investing in Heaven**

Matthew 6:19-21

- 2016 Stewardship theme—Investing in the Future.
- What do we have to invest? Money... Time... Talents...
- Everyone is investing their money, time, and talents in something. The question is where are you investing?

## I. The INSECURITY of earthly investments (v. 19).

- Are your investments eternally secure? Are you making wise investments that will bring eternal dividends.
- A. Not everyone will have the same when they get to heaven. Some will be rewarded for faithful stewardship. Others will have nothing—If you accumulate wealth only to enrich yourself with material goods on earth, you will have nothing in eternity. As it says in 1 Corinthians 3:15, "...he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."
- B. To have a reward in heaven you must invest in heaven. The very words "lay up" indicate we must do something. If you don't "LAY UP" a treasure, you will not have a treasure.

Some Christians dread the thought of leaving this world. The reason is their treasures are in this world. They have laid up nothing in heaven. Each day brings us closer to death. If your treasures are on earth, the closer you get to death, the closer you get to LOSING your treasures.

On the other hand, if you have faithfully been laying up treasures in heaven, the nearer you get to dying, the closer you moving towards your treasures, rather than leaving them behind to be burnt up.

## II. The INSURANCE of investments in heaven (v. 20).

► Wall Street may crash, but Heaven's streets will still be paved with gold. Banks on earth fail, but the Bank of Heaven still pays eternal dividends on investments.

- A. "But lay up FOR <u>YOURSELVES</u> treasures in heaven" (v. 20). God wants YOU to have something FOR YOURSELF in heaven! Your heavenly investment today will pay off for YOU in eternity.
- B. **HOW** do you "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven?"
  - Several years ago a layman named Pat Neff gave this testimony before the Southern Baptist Convention:

"All my life I have heard preachers tell their congregations to lay up treasures in heaven but no one ever told me how to get my treasures into heaven. I had to figure it out for myself.

The only way to get our treasures into heaven is to put them into something that is going to heaven. Cattle, lands, houses, stocks and bonds, oil, coal, and the like are not going to heaven. Only men, women, boys and girls are going to heaven. Therefore, if I am to lay up my treasures in heaven, I must invest them in the work of winning souls to get them to heaven."

- C. See the HIDDEN potential in people. Some times you hear it said about someone who appears not to have it altogether, "He/she doesn't have much of a future."
  - In 1799 a big lump of something—a stone supposedly—lay for years in a shallow creek in Cabarrus, North Carolina. No one paid much attention to it. 12 year old Conrad Reed was bow fishing in the creek when noticed the rock and took it home. His father, John Reed, thought it would make a good door stop. A geologist visited their home one day and recognized it as a lump of gold—the biggest lump of gold ever found east of the Rockies.
  - What do you see in certain people? A rock? A stone? Something only good to prop a door open? Or, do you see gold to be invested in heaven—A diamond in the rough?

I often wondered about my grandson, David. He was what some people might call a "wild-child." Time would fail to tell of all the mischief and the shenanigans he got into. Yet, I always believed there is a lot of potential in David if he ever got on track with God.

Sure enough, over the past year David has been focused on the Lord like a laser beam. His mother tells me he is constantly reading his Bible or watching videos of sermons. He walks downtown Port Orchard to pass out tracts. He was one of the preachers at our last Watchnight service. He witnesses all the time to his friends at school.

One of David's friends got upset with him for witnessing too much and broke off their friendship. David was greatly burdened for his friend's soul and called him up on the phone and lead him to Christ! But that's not all. He then bought his friend a Scofield Reference Bible with money he got from his birthday!

Who would have thought this would happen if you saw David two or three years ago. The lesson is clear—Have a vision of what God can do with someone in the future! Never write anyone off because you think they will never amount to much.

## **III.** The INCLINATION of the heart (v. 21).

➡Wherever your treasure is, your heart won't be far behind!

In the movie, "The Pirates of the Caribbean," Captain Jack Sparrow had a unique compass. Instead of pointing north, it pointed toward whatever the person holding it wanted the most. It could be treasure, or a person, or a location. But it only worked if the person holding it knew what they wanted.

But Captain Jack, being self-centered as he was, didn't really know what he wanted and so the compass didn't always work for him.

In the second "Pirates" movie, he was trying to find the chest containing the still-beating heart of Davy Jones. But Jack could not get a heading from his compass. So he convinces Elizabeth that finding the chest will reunite her with her true love. Because her heart was more certain at than Jack's, they get their heading and continue their journey.

What if you had a compass like that this evening? Where would the needle point? What is it that you treasure most in your life? Those are the questions that Jesus is dealing with in this passage.