

Heavenly Treasures *Matthew 6:19-34*

Theme: Heaven

Aim: To show that the treasures laid up in heaven are beyond decay and a worthy goal for the Christian.

1. Folks have some interesting ideas about heaven. For example a survey taken by U.S. News and World Reports in 1997 showed the following results: Oprah Winfrey is "very likely" or "somewhat Likely" to make the cut, according to 66% of Americans. Michael Jordan wasn't far behind with 65%. Al Gore and Hillary Clinton each scored 55% , but only 52% think Bill Clinton will walk the golden streets. Here's how some others were ranked: Pat Robertson - 46%, Newt Gingrich - 40%, Dennis Rodman - 28%, and O. J. Simpson - 19%. Mother Teresa grabbed the highest vote with 79%, but 87% of those surveyed think they themselves will probably go to heaven. -- U.S. News & World Report, Mar. 31, 1997, p.18.

2. But children probably have some of the most fascinating ideas about heaven. A woman named Karen Beck tells the following: "While standing in a check-out line, my six-year old daughter Cassandra began describing heaven to me. She talked about golden streets, jewels, and angels.

"God is preparing a place for us right now," I explained.

"Oh, I know," Cassandra assured me. "He's building houses for all of us, but he probably has barely started on mine."

Without taking a breath, she added, "But your house is probably almost done!"-- Karen Beck, Rothschild, Wisconsin. Christian Reader, "Kids of the Kingdom," (September/October '99).

3. The Bible is the only place to get reliable information about heaven. I want to note three things Jesus taught in Matthew 6:19-34 that relate to our eternal dwelling place in heaven .

I. First, this world is ultimately decaying and valueless.

A. Many spend an entire lifetime in the search for wealth and possessions. But notice what the Bible says.

1. Matthew 6:19.
2. 1 Timothy 6:6-10. No pockets on a burial shroud.
3. This physical world will some day pass out of existence, 2 Peter 3:7-14.

B. That does not mean we are totally uninterested in this world's things. Christians have to eat, clothe themselves, and provide for their daily bread.

1. But as Jesus says we cannot serve two masters, Matthew 6:24-33.
2. Riches cannot give us the eternal security we seek, 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5.
3. Our life needs proper balance between the earthly and the heavenly.

II. In contrast, our heavenly home is beyond decay!

A. Matthew 6:20.

1. It is an *eternal* dwelling place, Matthew 25:34, 46, John 10:28.
2. A place prepared by our Lord, a place where He dwells, John 14:1-4.
3. A place reserved and held for us by the power of God, 1 Peter 1:3-5.

B. This place called heaven is difficult to describe, as you know if you have ever tried to tell someone about heaven.

1. One writer said: "Heaven would hardly be heaven if we could define it." -- William E. Biederwolf (writer). Men of Integrity, Vol. 2, no. 4.

2. But our conviction that heaven exists *must* affect this life.

3. C. S. Lewis wrote: "If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of that other world that they have become ineffective in this."

4. That was certainly the case with folks like the Apostle Paul.

5. Are we laying up for ourselves those indestructible treasures in heaven?

III. Heaven should be our single goal in life, Matthew 6:30-34.

A. What is it that really dominates our life?

1. The story is told of a prominent, wealthy man who lay on his bed, dying. As he lay in his beautiful palatial home, with the best of doctors around him, he whispered with a note of despair, "I'm leaving home." Across town, there lay solitary figure in more modest surroundings. Her comfortable home contained the essentials of life, but in her eye was a gleam. Before she breathed her last, this Christian said to her loved ones, "I'm going home."

2. What about you today? Is heaven your single goal in life? Do you really want to go to heaven?

3. Matthew 7:21-27.

B. As C. S. Lewis observed, it is precisely our faith in heaven that allows us to live victorious lives of service.

1. It was so for Paul, Philippians 1:19-26, 3:12-21.

2. It can be so for us as well.

1. Poem, "O Blessed Moment" by Avis Christiansen.

2. Are you heaven bound today?

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