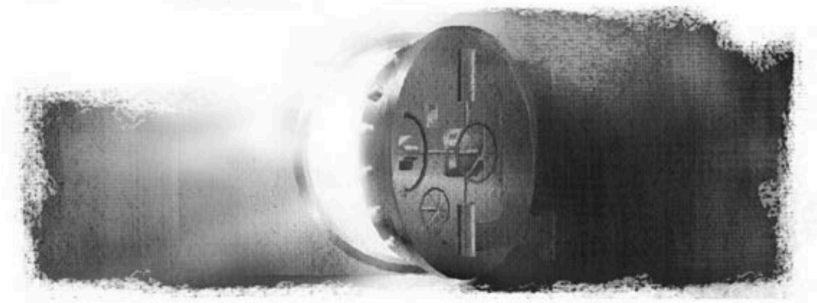


6 Laying up Treasures in HEAVEN

11 Feb. 23



Ice-Breaker: *What's your idea of treasure?*

Matthew 6:19-34 cev ¹⁹⁻²⁰Don't store up treasures on earth! Moths and rust can destroy them, and thieves can break in and steal them. Instead, store up your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy them, and thieves cannot break in and steal them. Your heart will always be where your treasure is. ²²⁻²³Your eyes are like a window for your body. When they are good, you have all the light you need. But when your eyes are bad, everything is dark. If the light inside you is dark, you are in the dark. ²⁴You cannot be the slave of two masters! You will like one more than the other or be more loyal to one than the other. You cannot serve both God and money. ²⁵⁻²⁶I tell you not to worry about your life. Don't worry about having something to eat, drink, or wear. Isn't life more than food or clothing? Look at the birds in the sky! They don't plant or harvest. They don't even store grain in barns. Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them. Aren't you worth more than birds? ²⁷⁻³⁰Can worry make you live longer? Why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow. They don't work hard to make their clothes. But I tell you that Solomon with all his wealth wasn't as well clothed as one of them. God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields, even though it is here today and thrown into a fire tomorrow. He will surely do even more for you! Why do you have such little faith? ³¹⁻³³Don't worry and ask yourselves, "Will we have anything to eat? Will we have anything to drink? Will we have any clothes to wear?" Only people who don't know God are always worrying about such things. Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these. But more than anything else, put God's work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well. ³⁴Don't worry about tomorrow. It will take care of itself. You have enough to worry about today.

- *Storing up things in heaven; what does that mean?*
- *What does it mean to serve money?*
- *Why is it a choice between serving God or money?*
- *Jesus tells us not to worry six times in this passage. What's his point?*

Hebrews 11:8-16 cev ⁸⁻¹⁰Abraham had faith and obeyed God. He was told to go to the land that God had said would be his, and he left for a country he had never seen. Because Abraham had faith, he lived as a stranger in the promised land. He lived there in a tent, and so did Isaac and Jacob, who were later given the same promise. Abraham did this, because he was waiting for the eternal city that God had planned

and built. ¹¹⁻¹²Even when Sarah was too old to have children, she had faith that God would do what he had promised, and she had a son. Her husband Abraham was almost dead, but he became the ancestor of many people. In fact, there are as many of them as there are stars in the sky or grains of sand along the beach. ¹³⁻¹⁶Every one of those people died. But they still had faith, even though they had not received what they had been promised. They were glad just to see these things from far away, and they agreed that they were only strangers and foreigners on this earth. When people talk this way, it is clear that they are looking for a place to call their own. If they had been talking about the land where they had once lived, they could have gone back at any time. But they were looking forward to a better home in heaven. That's why God wasn't ashamed for them to call him their God. He even built a city for them.

- *Would you take up a nomadic lifestyle? Why or why not?*
- *Why did Abraham choose to be a nomad?*
- *What do we take from these verses with regard to understanding faith?*
- *How are we challenged by this passage?*

Genesis 13:1-18 cev ¹⁻⁴Abram and Sarai took everything they owned and went to the Southern Desert. Lot went with them. Abram was very rich. He owned many cattle, sheep, and goats, and had a lot of silver and gold. Abram moved from place to place in the Southern Desert. And finally, he went north and set up his tents between Bethel and Ai, where he had earlier camped and built an altar. There he worshipped the LORD. ⁵⁻⁷Lot, who was travelling with him, also had sheep, goats, and cattle, as well as his own family and slaves. At this time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the same area, and so there wasn't enough pasture land left for Abram and Lot with all their animals. Besides this, the men who took care of Abram's animals and the ones who took care of Lot's animals started quarrelling. ⁸⁻⁹Abram said to Lot, "We are close relatives. We shouldn't argue, and our men shouldn't be fighting one another. There is plenty of land for you to choose from. Let's separate. If you go north, I'll go south; if you go south, I'll go north." ¹⁰⁻¹³This happened before the LORD had destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. And when Lot looked around, he saw there was plenty of water in the Jordan Valley. All the way to Zoar the valley was as green as the garden of the LORD or the land of Egypt. So Lot chose the whole Jordan Valley for himself, and as he started towards the east, he and Abram separated. Abram stayed in the land of Canaan. But Lot settled near the cities of the valley and put up his tents not far from Sodom, where the people were evil and sinned terribly against the LORD. ¹⁴⁻¹⁸After Abram and Lot had gone their separate ways, the LORD said to Abram: Look around to the north, south, east, and west. I will give you and your family all the land you can see. It will be theirs for ever! I will give you more descendants than there are specks of dust on the earth, and some day it will be easier to count the specks of dust than to count your descendants. Now walk back and forth across the land, because I am giving it to you. Abram took down his tents and went to live near the sacred trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he built an altar in honour of the LORD.

- *What was it that made Abram and Lot have to go their separate ways?*
- *What things have caused you to move and leave loved ones behind?*
- *Why did Lot choose the plain of Jordan? Would we?*
- *Why do you think Abram gave Lot the first choice?*
- *Summarise what we've learnt from this study?*