

## **WHERE IS YOUR TREASURE?** SLIDE #1

Matthew 6:19-21

Hollywood has made tons of money on treasure hunting movies. Indiana Jones, Titanic, Pirates of the Caribbean, National Treasure, and dozens more—are all stories about finding hidden treasure.

I saw a report on TV a few years ago about a 90 year-old man who used his metal detector every day to comb the beaches of Maryland looking for treasure. Finding hidden treasure excites us and brings a sense of reward and fulfillment.

In October 1947, there was a geologist by the name of Dr. John Williamson **SL#2** who was doing some work in the country of Tanzania. One day, he found himself driving in a deserted area, slipping and sliding along a rain-soaked road. Suddenly his four-wheel drive vehicle sank up to its axles in the mud and got stuck.

Pulling out his shovel, Dr. Williamson began the unpleasant task of digging out of a mud hole. He had been at it for a while when his shovel uncovered something strange. It was a pink-like stone of some sort. Being a geologist and naturally curious about rock formations, he picked it up and wiped away the mud. The more mud he removed, the more excited he became, and could hardly believe what he saw. When the stone was finally clean, Dr. Williamson was beside himself with joy. He had discovered a diamond.

Now, any diamond at all would be a surprise in that situation. But Dr. Williamson found what became known as the famous pink diamond of Tanzania worth millions of dollars. **SL#3** He had it made into a brooch and later presented it to Queen Elizabeth as a wedding present. It is considered one of the rarest and most precious jewels in the world, and Dr. Williamson is famous around the world for his find -- as accidental as it may have been.

Regardless of how precious that diamond is, as Christians we have a treasure that is far more valuable. **SL#4**

*<sup>19</sup>"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup>But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. – Matthew 6:19-21*

Jesus talks about a literal treasure— our possessions—and then he begins to make a spiritual lesson about them.

When Jesus encourages us not to “store up” for ourselves “treasures on earth”, He uses an interesting play-on words in the Greek. SLIDE #5

- a. “Store up” translates the Greek word thesaurizo.
- b. “Treasures” translates the Greek word thesauros.

These two words come from a common term from which we get our English word THESAURUS. A thesaurus is a treasury of words. So we might translate this phrase as, “do not

TREASURE up TREASURES for yourselves on earth.” **SL#6**

Jesus is not teaching against having a savings account—that would contradict other teachings of the Bible.

However, He is saying that we should not put all of our time and energy amassing possessions that are only temporary. If you are putting your heart, soul, mind, and strength into earthly treasures then you will lose everything, including your home in heaven.

You’ve probably heard the epitaph on a tombstone that reads: “What I spent, I lost. What I saved, I left. What I gave, I have.” As we invest in the Kingdom of God, we assure for ourselves an eternal reward.

Now let’s focus on what Jesus said in v. 21- *“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

Two truths I want you to consider:

### **1. We CHOOSE where we PLACE our TREASURE. #7**

This verse does not merely say, “You can find a person’s heart by finding his treasure.” I believe Jesus is saying that it is our choice where we place our treasure.

In a very real sense, part of my earthly treasure is right here in my wallet. In my wallet I have a little bit of cash. I have my debit card that represents my checking account. My driver’s license is in here. I have my AAA card and my Ollie’s Discount card.

How many of you have your wallet with you? . . . Will you please get it out? –Just hold your wallet up in the air for a

minute. (“WHAT’S IN YOUR WALLET?” – I’ve always wanted to say that!)

In a moment, I’m going to ask you to turn and hand your wallet to the person behind you or nearest you. Wait!!! Why all the groans?

Why does that thought immediately cause you to think, “I’m not so sure!” Don’t you trust the person sitting behind you? “Of course, I trust them. But I’m not giving them my wallet,” you are probably thinking.

(I find a person to give my wallet to: “Now \_\_\_\_ don’t be looking in my wallet!” \_\_\_\_\_, can you hold it up where I can see it?”

Here’s what I’ve done—I have chosen to move my treasure. I’ve chosen to place my treasure somewhere else. Now, although I’ve got more things to say, part of me can’t help but think . . . what is \_\_\_\_\_ doing with my wallet. (This brings me to the second truth.)

## **2. Our HEARTS will follow our TREASURE. SL#8**

Over the years I have known people who have come to God from all walks of life.

I have seen people make some drastic changes from a life totally controlled by sin – alcohol, drugs, materialism, crime, infidelity, pornography, etc. – and become strong, faithful Christians. All because they moved their treasure from the world and put it in the hands of the living God. And when that happened, their heart followed their treasure.

“OK \_\_\_\_\_ arm is getting a little tired. And he’s wondering if it would be alright to put my wallet in his lap or pocket, etc. And I have to decide. If I can’t see it, will it be safe? “OK\_\_\_\_\_ go ahead and place the wallet in your lap or pocket. I trust you.

### **This is what God is waiting for.**

SLIDE #9 This is the difference from merely attending church and giving your heart to God. It’s trusting God with your treasure even though you may not always see what He’s doing with it.

It’s putting your life into His hands to do with you whatever He sees fit. It’s serving His church when the temptation is sometimes to be doing something else. It’s saying “NO” to your friends when it’s not always popular to do so. It’s giving first to the Lord even when you could use the money for something else. It’s being faithful to Him even when you receive bad news about your health, your job, or your family.

I am going to make a choice and determine that God is going to be the number one priority in my life, and to get there I am going to put my treasure there.

### **Conclusion:**

In closing, I want you to understand that we have a precious, invaluable TREASURE in Christ and His church. It is a true treasure to have his promises of salvation and hope for the future. It is a treasure to know that Christ is our strength and help.

But, often we set that treasure aside for other treasure, and our hearts follow.

In so doing, our relationship with Christ suffers. Our spiritual strength weakens. Our church involvement wanes. Our joy diminishes. It's only when we choose to put our treasure back in God's hands that life makes sense.

When this TREASURE PRINCIPLE gets hold of my life, I find it much easier to get my eyes on the treasure and off of the trash.

If Christ and His church is not your treasure, then, friend, you are only wallowing in trash!

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Adapted from F. Sigle, J. Walling with additions by D.Simpson