

Temporary – or Eternal

ILLUSTRATION: Modern Parable of the Rich Fool (John Ortberg)

Luke 12:15-34 ¹⁵ And he said unto them, **Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.** ¹⁶ And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: ¹⁷ And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? ¹⁸ And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. ²⁰ But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? ²¹ **So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.** ²² And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. ²³ The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. ²⁴ Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? ²⁵ And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? ²⁶ If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? ²⁷ Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸ If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? ²⁹ And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. ³⁰ For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. ³¹ **But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.** ³² Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. ³⁴ **For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.**

James 4:14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

A startling thing has happened among Western Christians. Many of us habitually think and act as if there were no eternity. But being oblivious to eternity leaves us experts in the trivial and novices in the significant. We major in the temporary and minor in the eternal.

Psalms 39:4 LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.

This life lays the foundation upon which eternal life is built. Eternity will hold for us what we have invested there during our life on earth. The one central business of this life is to prepare for the next!

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

THAT'S WHY JESUS ALWAYS HAD TWO KINGDOMS IN MIND. He spoke of only two options that demand only one choice, and He taught there was a “default choice” if no choice was made.

Jesus' primary argument against amassing material things isn't that it is morally wrong, but simply that it is a poor investment. Material things just won't stand the test of time! He's saying, “Make a smart investment!” The treasures we store up on earth will be left behind when we leave. But the treasures we store up in heaven will be waiting for us when we arrive. You can't take it with you – but you CAN send it on ahead!

Psalms 90:17 And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

In the oldest Psalm on record, Moses says (literally in Hebrew), “Make permanent the work of our hands.”

YOUR HEART FOLLOWS YOUR TREASURE! Not just in eternity, but right now. You can direct your heart by directing your treasure!

The Christian who accumulates land and houses and bank accounts but doesn't invest in eternity isn't depicted by Jesus as unrighteous, greedy or selfish (even though he is all those). Rather, he is depicted as shortsighted, blind, and profoundly foolish.

Every heartbeat brings us one moment closer to eternity. Every day, the person whose treasure is on earth is headed AWAY from his treasure. But every day, the person whose treasure is in heaven is headed TOWARD his treasure.

Martin Luther said that on his calendar there were only two days – TODAY and THAT DAY.

ILLUSTRATION: Two Stickers – “Temporary” and “Eternal” – place the first stickers on several objects, the second stickers on several PEOPLE