**Putting God First**

Holding onto material things instead of Godly things

**Luke 12:15-21**And Jesus said to them, “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully,and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.”’ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

This verse makes me think of the show hoarders. If you have even seen this show, you know that these people never throw anything away for the fear that one day, they may need it.

It is our human nature to prepare for the worst. If you ever notice when the news announces a storm coming people flock to the stores and buy out everything on the shelves. Many times, you will hear about fights breaking out over a can of Peas.

There are people out there that will offer insurance for just about everything now days. You have home insurance, car insurance, flood insurance, health insurance, Pet insurance, Life insurance, food insurance. There are even companies that offer alien abduction insurance. You can’t watch a 30-minute TV show without seeing multiple ads for some sort of insurance. It is big money! Everyone wants to be ensured so that they will never have to go through any trials or live without some luxury in life. I wonder how much money a person spends on insurance in their lifetime for things that never happen? It is good to have when things do happen but isn’t God our best insurance?

Key Point: **The only true-Life insurance is Jesus Christ because there is no life without him.**

There are things we should do to be prepared for bad times. Like having health insurance for when you are sick, having spare batteries when a storm is coming or setting aside money for college or even retirement. That is good planning but that is not what Jesus was talking about in the parable:

1. This man was hording

‘What shall I do, **for I have nowhere to store my crops**?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: **I will tear down my barns and build larger ones**, and there I will store all my grain

He already had BARNS (more than one) full of grain but he wanted more so he wanted to tear them down and built bigger ones.

1. He was putting his trust in his barns full of grain, so he could be lazy.

“Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry”

### This verse is about putting God first and over the things of this world. The world tells you: “The person who dies with the most toys Wins” but in reality, Jesus tells us, they are the biggest losers in the end. “life is not about the abundance of ones possessions” (Luke 12:15)

Your relationship with Jesus Christ should be the most important thing in your life. Not Money, Friends, TV, Video games, Fashion, cell phones……

The enemy, who is in the world, wants us to believe we need things to be happy and safe. We are all guilty of falling for this.

* I would be happy if I just had….
* My future would be secure if I could just ….

The value of our life and who we are has become all about what we have compared to others around us. You see someone with something you want and you just have to have it. It is so easy to buy things now days. You don’t even need to leave your chair at home. There are TV channels dedicated to shopping. We are building bigger and bigger houses to hold all our stuff. Storage places are popping up on every corner. If you look back to the time of Christ everyone lived in little stone houses with just a handful of possessions. Even the house I grew up in as a child, in today’s standard would be considered tiny and low-income housing. Everyone wants to have the newest, biggest, best thing to show off. Anything that brings us attention and makes us feel good about ourselves.

Matthew 6:19,21 Jesus said “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal … For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Everything in this world will pass away. Cars will get break down, Diamonds will get lost or stolen. Cloths get worn out or go out of fashion, friends come and go, Money just disappears and technology breaks down but God is the only sure thing that will always be there.

Matthew 6:24 Jesus said “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and things.

Think about that for a minute. Some people may question whether this is true. Usually, those people are trying to juggle two priorities in their life. It may work for a while but eventually one always wins and the other gets left behind.

Let me ask, how would you feel if you found out your wife/girlfriend had another boyfriend? Or your boyfriend/husband had another girlfriend? (Angry, jealous, maybe even out for some good old fashion get even?) Now think about how God feels when you choose worldly things over him.

* If you love money but say God is your master what happens when it is time to give on Sunday. You have to pick one.
* What if you love to sleep in but have to get up Sunday morning for Church? You have to pick one.
* If you love TV or Video games and you know you should be reading you Bible. Which one wins? (you have to set a time aside)

You never know when God will say your time is up in which case all the preparations in the world are not going to save you, only your relationship with Jesus Christ can do that. Make sure you pick the right master!! The day will come where you will come before God and he will either say “Well done my good and faithful servant” (Mat 25:21) or “Depart from me for I never knew you”(Mat 7:23)

Jesus told several parables that showed how we should value the kingdom of heaven over everything else in our lives – Like a great treasure.

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

Matthew 13:44 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price

Matthew 13:45-46 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold **all** that he had and bought it.

Both these parables are about someone who finds a treasure so precious that they are willing to give up all that they have in order to obtain that treasure. The treasure they are seeking is a relationship with God so they can be a part of his kingdom.

*in Psalm 119:105 David wrote Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. (let me ask you: How do you use map?)*

To use a map, you first need to know where you are at then you can figure out how to get from there to where you need to go.it is useless unless you know where you are at first

So, in this verse the Word is compared to a lamp on our feet, to show us where we are currently at in our relationship with Christ and a light on our path to show us the direction, we should go to follow Him.

So, we can think of the Bible as a map. We can even say it is a great treasure map looking at the parables above where he says “in his joy he went and **sold all** he had to purchase the field with the Hidden treasure. “and “s**old everything** he had to buy the pearl of great price.”

The awesome thing is that the Kingdom of heaven is offered to you **free** but it will cost you everything. If you do not let go of the things that hold you back, those things you treasure more than your relationship with God, then you cannot have the ultimate treasure that God has to offer. The bible tells us to cast down EVERYTHING that exalts itself against God (2Cor 10:5).

You have to buy the entire field you can’t buy just the parts you like. Fully except Christ and yield to his will. The price may be great but in the end it will be worth it.

Note: The Treasure in these parables was knowing Christ and receiving his kingdom and once the person found the treasure, He was willing to give up everything he had to receive It.

Do you treat your bible like a great treasure map? Do you feel that following Christ is worth giving all that you are and all that you have?

Remember Jesus said where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Luke 12:34)

What do you treasure most in your life? Is it a relationship with Jesus Christ?

* What things are most important to you in your life (Things you can’t live without)? Write them down!
* Do you find yourself putting those things before God?
* What steps can you take to make sure God is 1st. Are you willing to take them?

This is not an easy thing to do and it is easy to make excuses but don’t wait till you here God’s voice saying ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you. Ask God to help you put him first in your life and to remove anything that holds you back from give all to have what he is offering.

**Be honest with yourself. It could cost you everything if you are wrong.**