

Treasure Hunting Sunday, March 9, 2014

Matthew 6:19-21

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matt. 6:19-21 ESV).

Introduction - The Raven

For those that may not know, I love to play the sport of paintball (the sport where you shoot at each other with paint pellets). I have owned some of the best equipment that is made today, but there is one that I will never forget: my first competitive level paintball marker: The Raven.

It may not look like much, but at the time, it was a high level piece of equipment. It was the kind of thing, that if I walked in carrying it, everyone would know I meant business. I wanted this thing so bad that it became my life's mission to obtain this masterpiece.

I worked part time at Canadian tire for months trying to get enough money to buy this thing. I worked extra shifts, came in early, left late, even prayed that my coworkers would get sick so they would call me to take their shifts. All of my time, energy, money, resources, skills, etc. were being used to get this thing.

Eventually the time came when I had saved the \$500 to buy the Raven and I ran off to the store to get it. I purchased the marker, brought it home, and gave it a try. I was so excited my hands were shaking. This was all I ever wanted.

I attached my air tank and gave pulled the trigger. The sound was beautiful. I was so excited I pulled the trigger again to get another taste of the power within my hands. Except this time, instead of the sound it should have made, there was a faint click and the sound of air hissing out from inside the gun.

It turns out, the Raven had a broken part, one that was the most expensive to fix, and, to my everlasting shame, no longer made. The realization finally hit me: the thing that I wanted the most, pull all my time into; the thing that everyone told me was the real deal, was now a \$500 paper weight.

What had become my treasure, and what was supposed to bring me complete satisfaction, had now not only become useless, but also had left me further back in my life than I was before.

What's Your Treasure? (Matt. 6:19-21)

It's probably no surprise that in these verses, Jesus is talking about possessions. Until we come to verse 21. Here, Jesus finishes with a common saying at the time. "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also". What He means here, is that what we spend most of our resources, time, and energy doing indicate what we care about the most. We put most of our time into what we believe will be bring us satisfaction; what will fulfill us.

What are some things we treasure in this life?

- Money
- Careers
- Popularity/Reputation
- Sports
- Education
- Relationships
- Our kids/grandkids

Examples of this are a mother and father who make sure to be at every hockey game, every dance recital, every concert, but who allow their child to skip church to do so. Or a student who is perfectly fine with attending every dance their school has even if it means skipping youth on Friday. Or a young adult who can't spare 5 minutes a day to pray and read their Bible because it cuts into studying time.

These are things that are important, but the world has convinced many of us that these are the things that will bring us satisfaction in life. In fact, it has become the world's religion. They say, "To have a meaningful, happy life is to be a great parent, spend quality time with your family and friends, etc."

These things are great to have, but they were never meant to become our treasure.

The Effects Of It All – Matt. 13:18-32 (Parable Of The Sower)

So what happens when we allow these things to become what we treasure most in life? They begin to take root in our lives and either evict or destroy anything else that is within our hearts. They become the stones and thorns mentioned in the parable of the sower in Matt. 13.

Reminder Of Parable: Sower is sowing seed. Some seed falls on the path and is eaten by birds, some falls on rocky ground and can't take root, some falls among the thorns and is choked out by them, and some falls on good soil and grows. These treasures become buried in our hearts and prevent the Word of God from taking root in our life at all, and choke the Word of God that was in there before hand.

"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful" (Matt. 13:19-23 ESV).

These things we're so fond of actually prevent the Word of God from producing fruit in our lives. The worst part is, treasuring these things will influence those who follow you to do the same (i.e. Parents, Mentors). You could be preventing the Word of God from growing in your friends and children's lives by your example! Do not assume that because you've been bringing your family and friends to church for so many years, that you are good soil! Is your heart really with God? Or upon closer look, is there something else you care about more?

The Only Treasure Worth Having (Matt. 13-44)

The fact of the matter is there is only one true treasure to be had in this world: the Kingdom of God.

This is what Jesus said in Matt. 13:44: *“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field” (ESV).*

Upon coming across the kingdom of heaven, the man in the parable took all that he had, all that he had worked for and all he was working for and sold it. Why?

He had found the only thing that mattered.

He knew that what he just stumbled upon was more important than everything else and he went after it with everything in him.

This is how we are to react to the Kingdom of God. After all, what should be more important to us than eternity? What should be more important than our relationship with Almighty God? What should be more important than the salvation of our friends, families, children and grandchildren?

Conclusion (Matt. 6:33)

If you're here and thinking, “But I need time with my family, money to live, education, etc!” Remember: the Lord knows these things. This is why Jesus tells us in Matt. 6:33 *“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (ESV).*

What's your treasure today? Are you hunting for the things of God? Or is there something in the way?

Treasure God and all hunt after all that He has for you. Everything else is secondary.