

You need to understand this and live it, because if you don't get on God's investment plan, all your investments will one day be utterly worthless.

What will the reward be for the disciple of Jesus who invests in heavenly treasures? The passage contains the answer!

Thursday

Read Matthew 6:19-21

Setting your life on the things of God builds your investment in heavenly treasures.

In Jesus' culture, the heart referred to the center of your whole existence – the home of your spiritual, moral, and emotional life. The heart was the center of your thoughts, desires, loves, decisions, and actions.

Where your treasures are located is a great indicator of where your life is focused – is what your life belongs to. If all your investments are with your house, or your retirement account, or even with your family (see above), that is where your life is focused. If you investments are with God, God is who holds your heart.

Friday

In preparation for Sunday worship, please read and reflect upon Matthew 6:22-24.

Devotional Your Investment Plan February 5, 2023

Monday

Read Matthew 6:19-21

Investment Check-Up

Investing in heavenly treasures is the investment that will endure for eternity. It's time to check over your investments to see how you're setup for God's Kingdom. It is going to involve a bit more than logging into your investment account online.

I want you to think back about two months (about Thanksgiving time) and think about your investments. After all, our investments are expressed in how we actually live our lives day-to-day, not by what we wish we would do. How have you invested in heavenly treasures in the past two months?

Jesus mentions these types of investments in heavenly treasures in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew (and one more from chapter 10):

5:12 – suffering persecution for Jesus' sake

5:46 – loving your enemies

6:2-4 – giving generously to the poor

6:5-6 – sincere prayer

6:16-18 – humble fasting

10:41-42 – showing hospitality to Christians for Jesus' sake

It's not an exhaustive list and it isn't a checklist. For instance, it is not easy to be persecuted for Jesus' sake in the way Jesus is talking about it in Rockingham County in 2023 but that doesn't mean you can't invest in other ways.

If you want to add to this list (and it makes sense to do so), think about the thing you think might be a heavenly investment and

make sure it is scriptural. It isn't a heavenly investment just because you want it to be. But how will you find it in that big ol' bible? Two suggestions: look for the word or phrase in the back of your bible. It might have a concordance that will lead you to relevant verses. Second, go online and type: *openbible* and your word or phrase. An example of a heavenly treasure could be raising children to be Godly. You could google "openbible raising children" and the first website that will pop up should be openbible.info. Click on it and it will list all kinds of verses that could be relevant. Then head back to your bible and read the passage... don't just rest on one verse.

Just like I can write up a bunch of stock certificates on my computer and call them real, we can make things heavenly treasures that are not real heavenly treasures.

How have you invested in heavenly treasures with your life?

What about your heavenly investments should you celebrate?

What about your investment strategy do you want to change?

Tuesday

Read Ecclesiastes 5:8–6:7

What does this passage teach us about earthly wealth? Some wisdom from the ages:

An abundance of evil can be revealed in wealth. But this type of evil should be viewed as more of a weakness. Therefore, everyone who guards his wealth for himself does not know the wisdom of God, nor is his heart inclined to insight, nor to instructing his children. He has neither received the words of God's commandments nor has he hidden them in his heart. – Evagrius of Pontus

People use their children as an excuse for gathering riches. At times they do injustice, rob and do similar things, saying: "I'm doing this

for my children." ... I have seen a person who struggled to become rich, but his riches were of no use. He did not enjoy them himself, nor did his son receive them, but he remained poor and in the same state as he had entered the world. After all, he was not born with money or with clothes....

Only the soul's goods can be taken away into heaven.... If he has done good with his money, if he has a good reputation and honor, and if he has tried to help the weak, then he takes with him something of what he has labored for, namely, that he has done good. – Didymus the Blind

If you are desirous of treasure, take the invisible and the intangible which is to be found in the heavens on high, not that which is in the deepest veins of the earth. Be poor in spirit and you will be rich, no matter what your worldly goods are. "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions,"¹⁷ but in his virtue and in his faith. This richness will enrich you if you are rich in your relations to God. – Ambrose

Where are you investing?

Wednesday

Read Matthew 19:16-30

The original disciples struggled mightily with this teaching from Jesus. They struggled because they believed, like we are all tempted to at one time or another, that our current lives are a perfect reflection of God's favor and God's favor consists primarily of material or familial blessings. The disciples thought that if someone was wealthy that the person was favored by God. American society (and most all societies) reflect this belief.

Jesus teaches that your earthly bank account has nothing to do with your heavenly account. The last shall be first and the first shall be last. [over]