

TREASURE IN THE HEAVENS (Part 3)

Luke 18:18, 20–23

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. 21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. 22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. 23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

Notice how the Bible links having “treasure in heaven” to having “eternal life”. Therefore, to have *treasure in heaven* isn’t just about having money or provision for the future. It’s really about *salvation*!

Luke 18:24

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

Should we really be surprised by Jesus’ words? Would a rich man ever agree to such terms? The answer is, YES.

Luke 19:2–9

2 And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. 3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. 4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. 6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. 8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. 9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

Zacchaeus was not righteous like the rich man in chapter 18. In fact, he was a sinner. He was a sinner because he was a tax collector. In that day, publicans or tax collectors were like mobsters. Rome allowed tax collectors to set their own prices. As a result, they would “cook the books” charge unfair amounts.

One day Zacchaeus had an encounter with Jesus, and Jesus agreed to be a guest at his home. Many believed this was a big mistake because Zacchaeus was a sinner. Understanding the risk Jesus was taking, Zacchaeus set out to prove that he was a changed man. Zacchaeus announced he would give HALF HIS GOODS to the poor, and would return the money he stole with interest!

Why did Zacchaeus part with his wealth so willingly, while the rich man clung to his? Why does the ASK of discipleship seem greater to some than to others?

The ASK always seems greater when...

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT

Matthew 13:44

44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Once again, the Bible associates the kingdom of heaven (God) with TREASURE! And again, this *treasure* is linked with selling all that one has. Now, the question is, What causes a person to sell out? According to this verse, a person “sells out” WHEN they know they’ve got something of value. Until you have something of value, selling out feels like *gambling*. Moreover, people would much rather make an exchange than lose everything on a gamble!

Matthew 13:45–46

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: 46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Again, we’re introduced to someone who has found TREASURE. Only this time, rather than finding it by accident, this person was *looking* for it. In either case, once the person realized they were in possession of real treasure, they “sold out”. Thus, what enables a person to *sell out* is when you KNOW WHAT YOU’VE GOT!

2 Corinthians 4:7–10

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. 8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; 10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

When you don't know the purpose or the value of a thing, you'll abuse/reject it.

The ASK always seems greater when...

YOU DON'T HAVE A PROPER VIEW OF YOURSELF

If your view of yourself is real HIGH, then your sacrifice will be real LOW.

Luke 7:36–38

³⁶ And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. ³⁷ And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, ³⁸ And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

In that day, an alabaster box and the oil that came in it was very costly. Why would someone sacrifice so much for something as common as feet washing?

Luke 7:44–47

⁴⁴ And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. ⁴⁵ Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. ⁴⁶ My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. ⁴⁷ Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

Oftentimes our love is little because our view of ourselves is too great. Great love comes from little people. The lower you see yourself, the more you will give of yourself!

Matthew 10:24–25

²⁴ The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. ²⁵ It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

The reason we struggle to give of ourselves is because we're overvaluing ourselves. Thus, our lack of sacrifice probably says more about us (how we see ourselves or the treasure) than it does about what we're asked to do!