

TREASURE IN THE HEAVENS (PART 2)

Luke 12:33

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.

We “lay up treasure in the heavens” whenever we give **alms**. Moreover, there are advantages to giving alms or storing up treasure in the heavens. If you recall, we said that giving alms can be a kind of *ransom* for our life.

Proverbs 13:8

⁸ The ransom of a man's life are his riches: But the poor heareth not rebuke.

This verse ISN'T saying that riches redeem (are given in exchange for) our *soul*. It's saying that riches can be given as a ransom (in exchange) for our *life*.

A man's (eternal) soul can *only* be redeemed by the blood of Christ. However, once redeemed, his riches can be a ransom for his (temporal) life. (After the firstborn in Israel was redeemed by the blood of the Passover Lamb, God said that they now belonged to Him. This meant they were obligated to serve God with their life for the rest of their days. However, they could be freed from this obligation, but they would have to pay a ransom or a redemption price!)

Thus, we might say that giving alms (storing up treasure in heaven)...

IT HELPS US

It helps us in *serving* God. Meaning, we can give alms *in exchange* for service.

Matthew 25:27

²⁷ Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

There are *other* advantages to giving alms (or laying up treasure in heaven), like...

IT PROTECTS US

Storing up treasure (giving alms) protects against disasters, crises or emergencies!

Genesis 41:46–48

⁴⁶ And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

47 And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. 48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.

Notice, Joseph “laid up food (grain)” in the *treasuries of Egypt* to protect against starvation during the seven years of famine.

(We should point out that while everyone else was forced to ‘buy’ food during the famine, Joseph’s brothers received provision for free!)

Genesis 42:25

25 Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man’s money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them.

Another advantage to giving alms (or laying up treasure in heaven) is...

IT ENLIGHTENS US

Matthew 6:20–22

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

When we “lay up treasure in heaven” it gives us *light*! In this example, the “eye” is a reference to the heart. (It’s by the *human heart* that light or knowledge is given to the whole “body” or man.)

Moreover, our “eye” is single when our focus is on God or being GENEROUS.

Proverbs 22:9

9 He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; For he giveth of his bread to the poor.

On the other hand, our “eye” is evil when our focus is on riches (covetousness).

Proverbs 28:22

22 He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, And considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

Now, if our “eye” (or heart) is evil, then our body will be filled with “darkness”.

Matthew 6:23

²³ But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

This means, anyone who does not give (store up treasure in heaven) has an evil eye and lacks spiritual light or truth!

1 Timothy 6:4–5

⁴ He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, ⁵ Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

There's one last advantage that I want to share with you.

IT CLEANSSES US

Giving alms (or storing up treasure in heaven) can have a *cleansing* effect on us!

Luke 11:37–42

³⁷ And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. ³⁸ And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner. ³⁹ And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. ⁴⁰ Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? ⁴¹ But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you. ⁴² But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Apparently, this cleansing effect ONLY applies to “alms” or grace-based giving. Other forms of giving or religious service do not seem to have this same effect!

Now, it's interesting to see how often our spiritual growth is influenced by giving!

Isaiah 58:7–8

⁷ Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, And that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? ⁸ Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, And thine health shall spring forth speedily: And thy righteousness shall go before thee; The glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward.

2 Corinthians 9:10

¹⁰ Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

Notice, God will not only increase our seed (money) when we give, but He will increase the fruits of our RIGHTEOUSNESS! However, this is ONLY true with a specific kind of giving—

2 Corinthians 9:7

⁷ Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

1 Timothy 6:17–19

¹⁷ Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; ¹⁸ That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; ¹⁹ Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Notice, when we distribute or give to others we lay up in store for ourselves “a good foundation”. When Paul speaks about having “a good foundation” he’s talking about doing good works.

Luke 6:47–48

⁴⁷ Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: ⁴⁸ He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.