

Change the Heart by Changing the Treasure

“Lay not up for yourselves **treasures upon earth**, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves **treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: **For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also**” (Mat 6:19-21). People sometimes say that God must change our hearts, as if we’re simply passive in the process and waiting on Him. But Jesus taught, “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” The location of our treasure—on earth or in heaven—dictates the condition of our hearts. It’s not that God must change our hearts first, then our desires will shift from earth to heaven. Rather, it’s that we must first change our treasure to heaven, then our hearts will be there also. To change our hearts, we must change our treasure!

Jesus began His Sermon with, “Blessed *are* the **pure in heart**: for they shall see God” (Mat 5:8). A pure heart consists mainly of clean thoughts and right motives, “the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb 4:12). He went on to teach, “That whosoever **looketh on a woman to lust** after her hath committed adultery with her already **in his heart**” (Mat 5:28), “For **out of the heart** proceed **evil thoughts**, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Mat 15:19). But how do we purify our hearts? By changing what it is that we treasure.

Now, treasure in heaven isn’t a wooden chest spilling over with gold coins and jewels. Treasure in heaven is our “Father which is in heaven” (Mat 5:16,45,48, 6:1, 7:11,21). God told Abram, “**I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward**” (Gen 15:1). He didn’t just say that He would reward him but that *He is* his reward! “**The LORD is the portion** of mine inheritance and of my cup” (Psa 16:5), “**Thou art my refuge and my portion**” (Psa 142:5 KJV) “**The LORD is my portion**” (Lam 3:24). What’s more valuable than being right with God and pleasing Him? Jesus said, “I do always those things that please him” (Jhn 8:29). And twice from heaven His Father declared, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mat 3:17, 17:5).

Paul’s letter to the Romans expounded the gospel message that Christ Himself preached, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ” (1:16), “the preaching of Jesus Christ” (16:25). The Greek adjective *kryptos* means “hidden,” “concealed,” or “secret.” His conclusion at the end of chapter 2 was, “But he *is* a Jew, which is one

inwardly [*kryptos* 2927]; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit [*breath*], and not in the letter; **whose praise is not of men, but of God**” (2:29). And this what Christ preached in His Sermon on the Mount, “**in secret** [*kryptos* 2927]: and thy Father which seeth **in secret** [*kryptos* 2927] ... thy Father which is **in secret** [*kryptos* 2927]; and thy Father which seeth **in secret** [*kryptos* 2927] ... unto thy Father which is **in secret** [*kryptos* 2927]: and thy Father, which seeth **in secret** [*kryptos* 2927]” (Mat 6:4,6,18). If our treasure is praise from men on earth, our hearts will be toward it and our actions will follow. But if our treasure is praise from God in heaven, our hearts will be toward Him and our actions for only Him to see.

This is what Paul meant later in chapter 8, “For they that are after the flesh do **mind** [*phroneo* 5426] **the things of the flesh**; but they that are after the Spirit [*breath*] **the things of the Spirit** [*breath*]. For to be **carnally minded** [*phronema* 5427] **is death**; but to be **spiritually minded** [*phronema* 5427] **is life and peace.**” (8:4-6). The Greek verb *phroneo* means “to mind” or “to seek.” The fleshly minded seek praise from flesh and blood which results in death, while the spiritually minded seek praise from God which results in eternal life and peace with Him.

Christ rebuked Peter, “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou **savourest** [*phroneo* 5426] **not the things that be of God**, but those that **be of men**” (Mat 16:23). Peter’s heart wasn’t right. He wanted to look big in front of the other disciples and made the grave mistake of correcting Jesus. He yielded to Satan in seeking praise from men. Paul said, “**Set your affection** [*phroneo* 5426] **on things above**, not on things on the earth” (Col 3:1-2), “**Whose end is destruction**, whose God *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who **mind** [*phroneo* 5426] **earthly things**” (Phl 3:19).

Our fear must be toward God in heaven and not men on earth: “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom” (Psa 111:10; Pro 9:10); “In the fear of the LORD *is* strong confidence” (Pro 14:26); “by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil” (Pro 16:6); “fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings” (Isa 51:7); “be not dismayed at their faces” (Jer 1:17); “be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words” (Eze 2:6).

The gospel Christ preached isn’t that we just believe some facts are true then we’re good to go. We must change our hearts. We do this by changing what we treasure.