**Jesus Thank You for my Treasures**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Matthew 5:10-12**

**Sunday Morning**

**September 30, 2018**

**Matthew 5:10-12**

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**What Difference Does a Future Heaven Make in My Life Today?**

**Colossians 3:1–2**

1 Keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Wise travelers go through a routine to prepare for leaving home—even if it’s just for a weekend getaway. Yet very few people ever take time to prepare for the ultimate journey to a distant land everyone will take. The journey I’m referring to is a one-way trip that will last for eternity: it’s the journey every Christian will embark upon to that:

**“Place called Heaven.”**

Saints, many Christians do not consciously spend a lot of time thinking about heaven—perhaps you haven’t either. That’s understandable. The overwhelming responsibilities of living in this world eclipse much thought about living in the next world. Additionally, the fact that we know so little about our home in heaven makes it seem both remote and irrelevant to our existence.

Yet we all inwardly yearn for a better world—especially when we experience the unexpected bad report from the doctor, the betrayal of a friend, the breakup of an intimate relationship, or the death of

a loved one. At those times we want to believe—we have to believe—that there is a better place in which to live. Gifted author Philip Yancey captures that reality when he writes:

**The Bible never belittles human disappointment . . . but it does add one key word: temporary. What we feel now, we will not always feel. Our disappointment is itself a sign, an aching, a hunger for something better. And faith is, in the end, a kind of homesickness—for a home we have never visited but have never once stopped longing for.**

**John 14:2-3**

2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

Saints, there are many reasons we should be thinking more about our future home in that **“place called heaven,”** but the most obvious reason is this: our departure for our future home is both certain and relatively soon.

**The Inevitability of Death**

“The statistics on death are very impressive,” one keen observer noted. **“One out of every one dies.”**

**Hebrews 9:27-28**

27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, 28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Saints, and when death comes, it comes suddenly—and often unexpectedly.

**Ecclesiastes 9:12**

“For man also does not know his time: Like fish taken in a cruel net, Like birds caught in a snare, So the sons of men are snared in an evil time, When it falls suddenly upon them.”

Saints, the Old Testament patriarch Isaac didn’t know the time of his passing. In the twilight of his life, he confessed,

**Genesis 27:2**

“I am old and I do not know the day of my death”

Saints, soldiers on the battlefield face the prospect of death daily. So do cancer patients who have been told their case is terminal. But have you come to grips with the fact that you are going to die—and that this event could be just around the corner?

If it’s true that God has ordained every day of your life—including the day of your death—every second that passes moves you closer to the grave. That’s a great reason to start thinking seriously about your eternal home.

**Luke 12:16-21**

16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." ' 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' 21 So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

That said Saints,

**The Benefits of Being “Heavenly Minded”**

**1. Focusing on Heaven Reminds Us of the Brevity of Our Earthly Life**

Saints, life is short. Eternity is long. To illustrate this reality, look at the dot as our life and death. The Line and arrow goes into eternity

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**James 4:13-15**

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

**1 Peter 1:24**

because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,

**2. Focusing on Heaven Prepares Us for the Certainty of Judgment**

Saints, **“Everybody Is Going to Heaven”** may be a popular song but it’s also a horrendous lie. God’s Word reveals that everybody is not going to heaven. In fact, very few people are going to heaven if Jesus can be trusted on this subject. The Lord urged people to

**Matthew 7:13-14**

13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Tragically Saints, the majority of humanity is on the wrong road that ultimately leads to the wrong destination. From the moment we’re born into this world we are on that road (or “way”) that is heading away from God. It’s the “way” of rebellion against God. As the prophet Isaiah wrote,

**Isaiah 53:6**

“All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

Saints, the reason why Jesus painted this narrow road is that most people won’t repent and believe in Him! Jesus’s statement in John refutes all religions in the world and said:

**John 14:6**

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

Saints, there is simply no escaping the fact that each one of us—Christians and non-Christians alike—will face God’s judgment when we arrive at the end of our lives on earth.

The “gate” or judgment for non-Christians is often called “the great white throne judgment” and results in eternal death.

**Revelation 20:11-15**

11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Contrary to what many believe, Christians are not exempt from God’s judgment. At the end of every Christian’s life is also a “gate” or judgment—but it’s a different judgment than the one non-Christians will face. This judgment or evaluation is often referred to as “the judgment seat of Christ.” Paul emphatically declared:

**2 Corinthians 5:10-11**

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

**3. Focusing on Heaven Motivates Us to Live Pure Lives**

There’s a day coming when every Christian’s “clothing” or actions will be placed under the glare of God’s judgment and will reveal any imperfections. That “day” is the day of Christ’s return in which “each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it”

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**1 Corinthians 3:13**

“each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.”

**4. Our Heavenly Rewards**

**1. The Imperishable Crown**

**1 Corinthians 9:24-25**

 24 “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate [disciplined] in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown”

Saints, all things on this earth are subject to decay and will perish. Jesus urges us to not store our treasures on earth

**Matthew 6:19**

“where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal”

**2. The Crown of Rejoicing**

**1 Thessalonians 2:19**

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?”

Saints, the apostle Paul tells us in Philippians to

**Philippians 4:4**

“rejoice always in the Lord” for all the bountiful blessings our gracious God has showered upon us.”

As Christians we have more in this life to rejoice about than anyone else.

**3. The Crown of Righteousness**

**2 Timothy 4:8**

“Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

Saints, we inherit this crown through the righteousness of Christ which is what gives us a right to it, and without which it cannot be obtained. Because it is obtained and possessed in a righteous way, and not by force and deceit as earthly crowns sometimes are, it is an everlasting crown, promised to all who love the Lord and eagerly wait for His return.

Through our enduring the discouragements, persecutions, sufferings, or even death, we know assuredly our reward is with Christ in eternity.

This crown is not for those who depend upon their own sense of righteousness or of their own works. Such an attitude breeds only arrogance and pride, not a longing, a fervent desire to be with the Lord.

**4. The Crown of Glory**

**1 Peter 5:4**

“And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”

Saints, though Peter is addressing the elders, we must also remember that the crown will be awarded to all those who long for or love His appearing. This word “glory” is an interesting word referring to the very nature of God and His actions.

It entails His great splendor and brightness. Recall Stephen who, while being stoned to death, was able to look into the heavens and see the glory of God

**Acts 7:55-56**

55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, 56 and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

**5. The Crown of Life**

**Revelation 2:10**

“Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

Saints, this crown is for all believers, but is especially dear to those who endure sufferings, who bravely confront persecution for Jesus, even to the point of death.

In Scripture the word “life” is often used to show a relationship that is right with God. It was Jesus who said,

**John 10:10**

“I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly”

**Key to Receiving your rewards**

**1 Corinthians 3:5-15**

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

**In Closing:**

**1. Is it your desire to see Jesus face to face?**

**2. When Jesus comes back will you have a heart of rejoicing to see Him or will you be ashamed of His appearing?**

**3. Have you stored up treasure in heaven that will last forever?**

**4. Is your treasure Gold, Silver, Bronze or Hay, Wood and Stubble?**

**Let's Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace." '**