

EASTER

Good Friday
MARCH 30
10:00AM
KIDS PROGRAMS
NOT AVAILABLE

Easter Sunday
APRIL 1
9:00 & 11:00AM
KIDS PROGRAMS AVAILABLE
NURSERY TO GRADE 6

EXPERIENCE HOPE BREAKING INTO HUMAN HISTORY

ST. ALBERT
ALLIANCE
CHURCH

the JESUS
MANIFESTO

For the Love of...

Mike Sotski

March 11, 2018

Matthew 6:19-21 NLT

"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be."

"We reveal what our treasures are by what we try to protect, secure and keep." ~ Dallas Willard

Want to know what you treasure... check your bank statement and your internet browser history.

False Narrative: Things bring happiness.

Matthew 19: 21-22 NLT

Jesus told him, "If you want to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." But when the young man heard this, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Matthew 6:24 NLT

No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.

Matthew 6:22-23 NLT

Your eye is like a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is filled with light. But when your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

"I am convinced that the greatest deterrent to giving is this; the illusion that the Earth is our home."

~ Randy Alcorn, The Treasure Principle

The question we need to consider is this: do we think that our best chance to enjoy the stuff of life is this side of eternity?

"However much one has, giving is a spiritual decision, not an economic decision. It really reflects the spiritual heartbeat of a person as opposed to the economic heartbeat." ~ Ron Blue

Kingdom Narrative:

Live open-handed, generous lives with the resources entrusted to us because God is the one who provides for all our needs.

Luke 12:31-34 NLT

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need. So don't be afraid, little flock. For it gives your Father great happiness to give you the Kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to those in need. This will store up treasure for you in heaven! And the purses of heaven never get old or develop holes. Your treasure will be safe; no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

Are you convinced that your level of giving is at a place that will free your heart from being consumed by the stuff you have or the stuff you think you need?

Apprenticeship Prayer Partner Challenge

This week with your Apprenticeship Prayer Partners share a time where you have seen God provide for your needs. Ask: how are you stewarding the resources God has trusted you with today? Are we using them in a way that builds the kingdom of God?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: DEACCUMULATION

Do you ever look around your home and think to yourself, "*where did all this stuff come from?*" Maybe you have watched the show Tiny House Living and it has motivated you that it is time to purge some of your stuff. Or maybe you have watched the show Hoarders and said, "*well at least I don't have that much stuff.*" Whatever side of the fence you are on, I think most of us would agree that we have an overabundance of stuff.

Ron Sider has said:

"If the Kingdom vision of Jesus doesn't re-shape our approach to possessions then we are not living out the kingdom vision."

Most people, though, struggle with letting go of things. Some of us feel great attachment to everything we own. Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount that as those who are choosing to re-orient our lives around Jesus, we need to determine who and what has our heart.

"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be. Matthew 6:19-21

This week as a spiritual practice take some time to go through some of your stuff and identify 5 things that you are going to give away. This isn't an exercise to get rid of your junk, although that can be helpful, but identify items in good shape that you know someone else would benefit from. Once you pass along these items it is not an invitation to go out and buy more things to replace those you gave away. Living as an apprentice of Jesus is learning that life in the kingdom can get crowded out by our accumulation of stuff.

You may find it difficult to watch your things go out the door. If this is the case, remind yourself that you live in the kingdom and that the things that really make you happy cannot be bought.

Adapted from James Bryan Smith.
The Good and Beautiful Life: IVP Books