**Where Your Treasure Is**

Based on [Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Mt6.1-6)

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Ash Wednesday

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Jesus says, “**Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also**.” Our treasure is not gold or silver, it is Jesus Christ, who is seated at the right hand of God the Father, ruling all things in heaven and on earth. He has conquered sin, disarmed the devil, and disable death. Our treasure is imperishable in the heavens, Jesus Christ who will come again to deliver us.

We know that Christ, being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has any power over him. **As we enter into Lent, however, the church chooses to especially remember the suffering and humiliation that Christ endured here for our sake.** During Lent, we remember that Jesus Christ, endured the cross, scorning the shame, to reconcile God to men. We remember Christ our treasure suffered willingly, and our heart is with him as we remember his humiliation that won for us salvation.

During Lent, we choose to remember the suffering of Christ, and so our heart joins his in that suffering. He is our treasure and our hearts are with him. He suffers for us; we mourn for him, in sackcloth and ashes, (or ashes at least). But these ashes are not just for show. Be mindful of the instruction St. Paul gives to Timothy, “**The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith**.”

Jesus says, “**Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven**.” Today we call this “virtue signaling,” and it is the spirit of our culture, a culture which has embraced a false gospel of political correctness and identity politics, thinking that righteousness is a matter of gaining man’s approval. There is nothing new under the sun, the new hypocrisy is the same as the old. It is as Jesus said, “**They love the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.”**

Sincerity //is the opposite of hypocrisy. The Lord calls the nation of Israel to sincere repentance saying by Joel the Prophet, “**Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.”** Jesus says, when you give to the needy, do not do it to be praised by others. When you pray, don’t put on a show for others, remember that you are talking to God, knowing that he may hear you and deliver you. When you fast, you are not making atonement by your suffering, nor virtue signaling for pity. You are living out the instruction of the Lord who has written, “Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

And we need God’s Word, because we are dead men and women. Dust you are, and to dust you shall return. Scripture says, “**You are dead in your trespasses and sins.”** In a vision, God showed Ezekiel his people, and they were a field of dry bones. He asked, “Son of man, can these bones live?”

We are born spiritually blind, spiritually dead, and enemies of God. Death and sin still cling to our bodies. You will receive ashes on your foreheads in the shape of a cross. **The ashes remind us that God must carry out his curse and put our flesh to death; but the sign of the cross is the same sign you received when you were baptized.** “All who have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into his death. We were therefore buried with him by baptism into death so that, just as he was raised through the glory of the father, we too might walk in the newness of life.

Walk in the newness of life. Give to the needy, pray, fast and rend your hearts. All that you have in this life will pass away. Your money will pass away, so give alms and make friends for yourself in heavenly places**. Your work will pass away, so pray that God’s work in you will endure to eternal life.**  Your body will pass away, so fast and find your nourishment in food for the soul which is the Word of God. The earth will be reduced to cinder and ash before Jesus comes to make all things new.

No one willingly invests their money in Junk stock. So do not build up treasures on earth where moth and rust decay, and where thieves break in and steal. Repent, turn to the Lord. Use your time wisely, give without gain, pray without ceasing, hunger and thirst for righteousness.

And above all, repent. Be angry and do not sin. **Turn to the Lord, and he will not turn away from you. Jesus Christ is the one who gave up his life so that he could take it up again in glory, and redeem us for his Father’s kingdom.** He fasted in the wilderness and overcame the devil. He prayed for us and still prays that we would not fall. He gave to the needy, not gold or silver, but his holy precious blood and innocent sufferings and death, our treasure on earth as it is in heaven.