**The Excellency of Heavenly Treasures!**

[Ezekiel Hopkins](https://gracegems.org/33/Hopkins_Books.htm), 1633-1690

[Matthew 6:19-23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%206.19-23)
"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves *treasures in Heaven*, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also!
"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"

***~~INTRODUCTION~~***

There is not a soul in the world so destitute and beggarly, but it has something that it calls and esteems as its *Treasure*. Not only he who has, as the Psalmist speaks, all that his heart can wish, who grasps in possession whatever his covetousness and unbounded desires grasp in imagination, but he also who possesses nothing but his own poverty, who has no abundance but poverty and misery—such a one whom you would never suspect to be a hoarder, yet he has hopes for enjoyment of which he counts precious and his soul's treasure.

In dangerous and difficult times, what is the first and chief care of every man, but so to dispose of this his treasure, that, whatever losses he may sustain in other accessory good things, that are but lumber and utensils to the soul, yet his Treasure may be secured both from corruption and violence?

Our Savior here throws open before our view two Repositories, or Common Treasuries: Vast ones, they are; wherein all the good things, that ever any man in the world enjoyed, are laid up: and they are Earth and Heaven. If you have any treasure, as certainly every one of you has, it must belong to one of these two places: you must deposit it either on earth or in Heaven.

"Look now," says Christ: "take a view of Earth's Treasury; and what do you see there? There, indeed, is the World's Treasure: all that many millions of men have been gathering together, and hoarding up for several ages."

If you would have an inventory of all this store, John has exactly cast it up in [1 John 2:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%202.16) and it amounts to this sum: All, that is in the world, says he, is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life: that is, there are Pleasures, suiting the evil propensities of the flesh. There are Riches, for the greediness of the eye; for, What, says the Wise Man, is laid up for the owners thereof, save the beholding of them with their eyes? And there are Honor and Dignity; that airy, good thing, that puffs up; that is the pride of life: and this is the world's all; and that, which many thousands make their treasure.

Yes: but, says Christ, do not you see how rusty and worm-eaten these things are? Do you not see what a bustle there is among the men of the world to get them? One pulls them from another, and they are never certain in any man's possession: moth and rust corrupt them, and thieves break through and steal; and, therefore, lay not up your treasure here on earth.

There is another treasury for you to store up your good things in, and that is Heaven; a sure and safe place, where no corruption infects, nor does any violence intrude: therefore, lay up your treasure there: lay up your treasure in Heaven.

And thus you have the scope of our Savior in these words.

In the words themselves, you have:

A Command or Exhortation; and that is, to lay up treasure in Heaven.

You have the Enforcement of this command.

And that is from a double reason:

FIRST. From the Security of that treasure that is laid up in Heaven. It is there safe and free from all danger; which it could not be, were it any where else deposited.

All hurt and danger, that can befall a man's treasure, proceeds either,

First. From Inward Principles of Corruption, that do of themselves cause decay in it.

And thus it is with all Earthly Treasures. They are, of themselves, fading and perishing. Riches perish with the using: they rot out and wear away, while we are using them. All earthly manna, the sweet and luscious things of this world, breed worms that eat upon and devour them. All the riches and treasures of the world have rust, that attends on them, and consumes both them and their beauty and substance.

But spiritual manna never turns into worms: treasure, laid up in Heaven, is never eaten with rust. No, says Christ, there rust does not corrupt: that is, they are free and safe from all inward decays and perishing, from their own inward principle and nature.

Secondly. Treasure may be unsafe, as from an inward principle that may corrupt, so also from outward accidents that may consume them.

And thus we see oftentimes it comes to pass. Sometimes,

First. Insensibly, through a secret blasting curse of God, wasting them by little by little, and unperceived decays; so that, while we hold them in our hands and look upon them, then they perish! And this is here compared to the eating of a moth. A moth makes not a sudden rent in a garment, but spoils it by unseen degrees: so fares it oftentimes with the things of this world: if they be not torn and rent from us, yet are they moth-eaten comforts: the moth is got into them, and destroys them imperceivably. And, sometimes,

Secondly. By sudden violence; compared here to thieves breaking through and stealing good things and treasure away. An unexpected turn of providence does, at once, many times snatch away all that men here prize and set their hearts on: and then, where is their treasure? In Hosea 5 we find God threatening, both these ways, to destroy Ephraim. In [Hosea 5:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Hos%205.12), I will be unto Ephraim, says God, as a moth; and to the house of Judah as rottenness: that is, the Lord would consume them silently and unperceivable, as a moth eats out in the spots of a garment. And in [Hosea 5:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Hos%205.14). I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: and I, even I, will tear and go away: I will take away, and none shall rescue. That is, I will destroy him by a violent and sudden destruction.

But, treasures laid up in Heaven are secured, both from insensible decays, and also from sudden violence; secured, both from the corruption of the moth, and from the stealing of the thief. It is rich and sure treasure, that is laid up there.

And now is the time of your laying up heavenly treasures. Some few years from now, and it cannot be long first, but you shall have these treasures opened to you, and you let in, to see how rich you are. And you will find them augmented above what you could believe: there is not the least of all that you have laid up lost or diminished. And then you will wonder and question with yourselves: Who laid up this and that part of your treasure: you will then ask, "Is this glory mine, and that glory mine? Is this throne and that brightness, this diamond and those stars, this robe and that sunbeam, all this precious and inconceivable treasure, are they mine? I cannot remember that ever I laid up so much and such precious treasure: my faith sometimes pried through a crevice into this treasure, and it told me that there were great and glorious things stored up, and it told me also that they belonged to me; but, O my dim-sighted eyes, that could not reveal to me the one half of that glory, wherein I am now lost and swallowed up!"

Thus a Christian will then admire how he came by so much treasure, when he comes to the possession and enjoyment of it. Plutarch tells of a rich Roman who he did not think any man rich, who knew all that he had. Truly, in this man's account, a Christian is truly rich: he has laid up more treasure, than himself knows of. But, though a Christian knows not how much he has, yet he shall lose none: it is safe, being laid up in Heaven: every star is as a seal set upon the treasure-door, that none may break in and violate it.

And that is the first argument: Lay up treasure in Heaven, because there only it is safe. Only there, the moth does not corrupt, and thieves do not break through and steal.

SECONDLY. And then, secondly, another enforcing reason you find in the next verse; and that is, because, by laying up Treasure in Heaven, you lay up your Hearts also in Heaven: for, where your treasure is, says Christ, there will your hearts be also; and where your hearts are, there are you.

What an argument is this, O Christians! Would you yourselves be laid up safely in Heaven before you come to be laid down in your graves? Would you pre-occupy your own immortality and glory? Would you send all your thoughts and all your desires, as spies into the Land of Promise, to discover the riches, and beauty of it? Then lay up your treasure there: this will center all your thoughts, this will fix all your affections on itself; and, though now you are on earth and walk on earth, yet this will make your conversation to be in Heaven, if your treasure be there.

It is impossible that you and your treasure should be at a distance. If your treasure is on earth, your minds will be there also: you will grovel here below. The serpent's curse will be upon you: Upon your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life. But, if your treasure is laid up in Heaven, it will attract and draw up your hearts unto it; and make them heavenly hearts, as itself is a heavenly treasure.

Now all this is backed with another consideration, in the beginning of the words; and that is, Lay up *for yourselves*treasures in Heaven. You may indeed lay up treasure on earth, but it is a gamble whether it be for yourselves. Here men sweat and toil to get estates, and heap up treasures; but they know not who shall enjoy and possess them. They labor all their days to purchase a few uncertain riches; while, usually, by that time they purpose to reap the fruit of them, death comes and snatches away their souls; and the greatest use they can make of them is, only to bequeath them unto others.

He alone, who is rich towards God, lays up treasure for himself; and lays up those riches, that he needs no legacy to dispose of. A Christian is his own heir; and, what he himself has gotten, he himself shall eternally enjoy and possess.

And thus you have the parts of the text: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven."

There is nothing in the words, that needs much explanation: I shall, therefore, only in brief inquire into two things.

What is here meant by Treasure.

What is meant by Laying up this treasure in Heaven.

***~~First. What is here meant by Treasure.~~***

I answer: It is a metaphorical expression; and denotes to us that which we set the highest rate and value upon; that, the getting of which we most endeavor, the enjoyment of which we most prize, the loss of which we most bemoan. In a word, that which we account as our greatest and best good, is our treasure, be it what it will.

***~~Secondly. The next inquiry is, what is meant by laying up this treasure in Heaven.~~***

I answer: It is nothing else, but to esteem Heaven and the things of Heaven, thus to be our treasure; to rate and value them above all things else, and to look upon them as our chief good, and accordingly to seek and labor after them.

I might now propound many Observations to you, as indeed every word of this precious Scripture is pregnant with them: but I shall only mention one; intending only to insist upon that. And it is this:

***~~Doctrine. That Heavenly and Spiritual Things Are, and Ought to Be, of the Greatest Value with Every True Christian.~~***

Or thus:

***~~A True Christian Does Esteem, and He Ought to Esteem, Heavenly Things above All Things.~~***

What are these heavenly things, but God and Christ, grace and glory, spiritual and eternal concerns? These are the choice things of a Christian: whatever else he may possess, yet these are his treasure.

See how Abraham stings Dives with a sad item of what he made his treasure on earth, in [Luke 16:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2016.25). Son, says he, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things: but did not Abraham himself, in his lifetime, receive good things also? Might not Dives have retorted back again, "Were not you, Father Abraham, rich and potent on earth? Had not you great power, and great possessions in the world? And, must I be tormented and you glorified, when you had a greater portion of them than myself?" No, the emphasis cuts off this exception: You, in your lifetime, received YOUR good things. "I received good things; but not *my*good things; not the chief that I valued. Comforts they were; but not treasures: and, while I possessed these good things, I sought after better things; and therefore I now possess and enjoy them also."

So holy Asaph views this treasure, that here he had got, in a divine rapture, in [Psalm 73:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2073.25). "Whom have I in Heaven but you? and there is none upon earth, that I can desire, besides you!" He was so far from desiring anything above God, that he desires nothing besides God. What is there on earth, that I can desire besides you?

See Paul also, in [1 Corinthians 2:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%202.2). I determined not to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified: but, especially in [Philippians 3:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%203.8). Doubtless, says he, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffer the loss of all things; and count them but dung, that I may win Christ. Observe how the Apostle does there despise all that the world counts its treasure: he reckons it but dung, in which a man may rake long enough, before he finds any true treasure: nay, not only dung; but loss, in comparison of Christ. "And, what do you tell me of losing all things for him? It is true, I have done so; but, in doing so, I have but lost a loss, I am but rid of a damage. I count all things but loss; and I suffer the loss of all things, for Christ."

This is the low and villifying account, that a child of God makes of everything that is not his treasure. *God and Christ, and the things of eternity, are his chief and choice good. Whatever he has besides, is but dung, but loss, but a damage.*

In the heart of a carnal man, all things lie in a confused order; Heaven below, and earth a-top: earth seems to him to be vast and infinite; but Heaven seems a little inconsiderable spot.

But in the heart of a child of God, everything keeps its natural posture: there earth sinks, as being the dregs of his thoughts and cares; but Heaven shines above, very bright and glorious. Earth, to him, seems to be but a little spot, as indeed it is, which is seldom seen or noted by him; but *Heaven is as an infinite boundless sea of mercy*, which he is still looking into and admiring. Thus things keep their natural posture, in the heart of a child of God; but they are all disordered, in the heart of a wicked man.

To prosecute this farther, I shall endeavor to,

**I. Open to You the Riches of this Heavenly Treasure**; that it may appear how rationally the children of God act, in valuing this above all things, and in making it their choice good and chief treasure.

And,

**I.**It is an evident demonstration of the preciousness of this treasure, in that it makes those things precious also, that are but incidental to it; and therefore, certainly, it is mighty precious itself. It bestows a luster, excellency, and beauty upon everything that lies near it, or that has any relation to it.

I will mention but two things.

***~~1. The Deeds of Conveyance, whereby this treasure is made over to us and becomes ours, are therefore precious, because they convey such a treasure.~~***

And what are they, but the Promises? Every promise is a ticket, given us by God, to take up mansions of treasure in Heaven! It is vocal glory: it is happiness, in words and syllables: it is eternity, couched in a sentence. And, therefore, no wonder that the Apostle speaks so magnificently of them: Whereby, says he, are given unto us *exceeding great and precious promises*.

Tell me, therefore, O soul! did you ever see the glory and riches that there are in a gospel promise? Were you ever ravished with that infinite sweetness and deliciousness that you suck from them? Did you ever sit down amazed at the free and boundless love of God in them; that spoke good to your soul, for a great while to come, as David speaks? Did you ever find the excellency and preciousness of these things? Think, then, how precious that glory itself is, that fills these promises. If a star be so bright and sparkling, that shines only in a borrowed brightness—then how transcendently bright then is the sun, that lends so much light to it! If the conduit-pipe be ready to burst, through the abundance of streams that flow from it; how inexhaustible is the fountain and spring-head, that supplies this treasure!*If the gleanings are so rich and full, what will the vintage be?*

The glory and happiness of Heaven is so great and boundless, that it overflows and spills itself abroad in Promises; and, if the overflowing *drops*are so sweet, what then will the *ocean*itself be?

What says the Apostle in [1 Peter 2:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Pet%202.7)? Unto you, that believe, Christ is precious! How is he now precious unto believers, but as he is held forth in a promise? That is all the way, in which he becomes precious to us now. And will he not be far more precious to us, when we shall no more stand at the distance of a promise from him? when we shall no more need the *hand of faith*; but shall clasp and cling about him, in the immediate fruition of him? Will he not be more precious to us, when all our hopes shall be made good to us in actual present possession? And, therefore, if the promises are so exceeding great and precious, it argues, certainly, that that treasure, that makes these promises to be so, is wonderfully and infinitely glorious and precious.

***~~2. As the promises are precious, so the very Eye that sees and views this treasure, is made precious by the sight of it.~~***

And what is that eye, but the *eye of faith?*and, though it be but weak, yet it is that with which, by the help of a promise as by a telescope, we look into Heaven itself, to see that mass and those heaps of treasure laid up there for the soul. The eye of faith sees them: the hand of faith counts them out: and, therefore, Peter calls precious faith: [2 Peter 1:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Pet%201.1) to those who have obtained like precious faith with us. You may look upon earthly treasure until your eyes be dazzled, yes, possibly, until they be weakened and wearied by it; but never will they be made more rich and precious by it. But, by looking upon this Heavenly Treasure, the eye that sees it becomes a jewel itself; more precious, says the same Apostle, than the gold that perishes! [1 Peter 1:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Pet%201.7).

And that is the First excellency of this heavenly treasure. It is precious treasure, in that it makes those things precious, that are but conversant about it; Precious Faith, and Precious Promises.

***~~Heavenly Treasure Is Soul Treasure, Suited to the Soul.~~***

And, therefore, look how much more noble and excellent the soul is than the body—so much more excellent is Heavenly Treasure than Earthly Treasure. For what serve these things on earth, but to clothe and feed the body; and yet, for all this, the soul may be naked, and miserable, and lack suitable provision. Truly, we may lament the condition of the richest sinners on earth; and say over them, in compassion,*O poor souls, what husks and swine's-food do you give your souls*, while you set the whole world before them! for, all in the world is no better. There is nothing in it, whence you can pick out suitable nourishment for your souls: and therefore *Christ justly brands the rich man in the Gospel for an absolute fool*, who, when he had filled his barns with corn, said to his soul: Soul, you have much goods laid up for many years.… eat, drink, and be merry. A fool, indeed! to reckon his soul's goods by barns'-full! He might as wisely have boasted, that he had provided barns full of thoughts for his body, as barns full of corn for his soul. And, yet, such is the provision, that most men make for their precious souls.

Tell me, Sirs, do you really believe that this is such provision as your souls can live upon? or, do you think your souls need no provision? What! must *your bodies which at first were kneaded out of the dust and must before long be crumbled into dust again*—must these bodies engross all your care, how to provide for them, and to please them; and shall your spiritual and everlasting souls be wholly neglected by you? It will not be long before your bodies shall never more know a difference, between treasure and poverty, between fullness and hunger; and, then, what serve all these things for, that, with so much pains and industry, you have laid up? Truly, it is a long journey into the other world; and gold, and silver, and Earthly Treasure are too heavy a portage to be carried with you thither. Those, who now make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience to get Earthly Treasures, will, before it be long, make shipwreck of them also. When you come to launch out into eternity, you shall carry nothing with you of your earthly treasure into the other world; unless it be the rust of it, to witness against you; you shall carry nothing of your gold; unless it be the guilt of it, to condemn you. These are unfit things, therefore, to be laid up by you as your souls' treasure.

But Heavenly Treasure is suitable treasure; suitable to your souls: and that, in a twofold respect.

Heavenly Treasures are suitable to the *Nature*of your Souls. And,

They are suitable to the *Necessities*of your Souls.

**1. Heavenly Treasures are suitable to the Nature of your Souls.** And that, in these two respects:

They are *Spiritual*Treasures, for an Immaterial Soul.

They are *Durable*Treasures, for an Immortal Soul.

And, therefore, they are *suitable*treasures.

(1) Heavenly Treasures are ***Spiritual***; and therefore suited to a soul, which is of a spiritual and immaterial substance.

Hence the Apostle in [Ephesians 1:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%201.3) blesses God, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus. Truly, heavenly things are these spiritual blessings, refined from all dull and earthly mixtures. God himself, who is the total sum of all the treasures of all the saints on earth, is a spirit himself: his love and favor, a saving interest in him, communion and fellowship with him—are all spiritual things, that a carnal eye cannot see, neither can a carnal judgment value. The most suitable are they, therefore, to a soul, that is a spirit. Of all things belonging to a man, the breath of a man is the most subtle, invisible, and spiritual: but the soul is called the Breath of God metaphorically, [Genesis 2:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%202.7) and, therefore, is of a very high degree of spirituality.

Now, bring spiritual things to spiritual: debase not your spiritual and high-born soul, by matching it to the base and inferior things of the world. *Let not your pure and spiritual soul be unequally yoked with the dregs and dross of any worldly pleasures*. God and Christ and the things of eternity are suitable to the soul: they are spiritual, like your spiritual and better part; and, though to a carnal heart these seem but empty and notional things, yet a child of God tastes more sweetness and comfort in these things, than in whatever the world can present unto him. The love of God, the consolations of his Spirit, actings of grace, hopes of glory—these invisible things, these are the true riches.

And, then,

(2) Heavenly Treasure is the only ***Durable***Treasure, and therefore suited to an immortal soul.

The things of this world will not go one step with you beyond this present life. And, what a sad parting hour will that be to the soul, to go into another world, and to leave all its treasure behind in this world! How reluctant will it be to enter upon so great a journey, without a treasure to defray the charges of it! How ghastly will the soul look back upon those things, that it made its treasure! "What!" will it say, "I cannot carry this estate and that treasure out of the world with me? Must we thus part forever?" Yes, O soul, forever: for none of these things can you carry with you. And, oh what a sad thing will it be, for the poor soul to be set ashore upon the vast ocean of eternity, and to have nothing at all to relieve and support it—all its treasure being in another world!

But Heavenly Treasure is durable treasure. It is current not only in this world, but in the other world which is to come. In [Proverbs 8:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%208.18) says Wisdom, Riches and honor are with me; yes, durable riches and righteousness. Indeed, righteousness is this durable riches. When all things in the world stare on you, and you on them, and so take leave of one another eternally; yet then the love of God, a saving interest in Jesus Christ, his divine and heavenly graces—these will then stand by you and keep you company, yes and enter into Heaven, and there abide with you to all eternity. It is true, your faith, which is now a busy and active grace, that like Moses does here get up to Mount Pisgah and there take a view of the Land of Canaan, must itself die before it comes there: yet this is no lessening of your treasure, though you do lose your faith; for, indeed, it is not so much the loss of your faith, as the swallowing of it up, a changing of it into sight and vision: faith and fruition are inconsistent one with another.

But all your other graces, love, joy, and delight, which are now often eclipsed and faint and languish in their actings, shall then keep an eternal jubilee. Never fear the failing of your happiness. It is true, here, the waters only bubble, and they may and often do fail. But, there, *you shall bathe yourself in an infinite ocean of delight!* There, you shall lie at an ever-flowing, over-flowing fountain of sweetness! God shall be eternally there, and you shall be eternally there! He will be eternally glancing and smiling on you, and you shall be eternally warming and cheering yourself in that sunshine!

Therefore, think with yourself, if indeed God can be exhausted, if Heaven itself can be impoverished, if infinite riches of glory can be all spent and consumed—then and not until then, can your treasure fail you. Never shall one star of your crown twinkle, much less shall it ever be eclipsed. [1 Peter 5:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Pet%205.4). We shall receive a crown of glory, that fades not away: it shall be forever as glorious, orient, and flourishing, as it was at its first putting on. *Indeed, eternity will be the perpetual beginning of your happiness!*

And thus you see how suitable this treasure is to the Nature of the Soul; in that it is *Spiritual*Treasure, for a soul that is a spirit; and it is *Durable*Treasure, for a soul that is immortal. So we see that Heavenly Treasure is suited to the ***Nature***of the soul

***~~2. Heavenly Treasure is also suited to the Necessities of the Soul.~~***

What is it, that the soul can stand in need of, that it cannot be supplied withal from hence?

Does it need a price to redeem it? here is laid up the precious blood of Christ, that was shed for the sins of many.

Is it pardon and forgiveness that it needs? Here is abundant mercy.

Is it sanctification and holiness? Here are riches of grace.

Is it joy and comfort? Here are abundant consolations.

Is the soul wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked? Here is gold to make it rich: here is white clothing to clothe it, and eye-salve to recover its sight.

Indeed there is nothing that the soul can want or desire, but you may have supplies for it from your own treasure; from that treasure which you have laid up in Heaven. See that rich place, [Philippians 4:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%204.19). My God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus! All your needs; not only your corporal needs and necessities, but also your spiritual necessities.

Here, all Earthly Treasures fall short: the exigencies of the outward man they may relieve, but the greatest abundance of them cannot quiet a troubled conscience, nor appease an angry God, nor take off the guilt of sin; nor can they redeem the soul from eternal wrath. No, the redemption of the soul is precious—too precious to be purchased by all these Earthly Treasures. When God frowns upon the soul, and conscience upbraids, and hell-fire flashes in the face of a sinner—how truly poor and miserable is that man, who has no better support and comfort than these unsuitable things! All the world, as great as now it seems to be, will be judged too vile a price to procure one minute's ease in Hell. What would the soul then give for a Savior, for a slighted and despised Savior, to interpose between it and justice? Believe it, then you will have other thoughts of the favor of God, of a saving interest in Christ, and of this heavenly and spiritual treasure, than now you have. Now, in your peace and prosperity, possibly, these appear to you to be no better than *imagined treasures and airy riches—*but when the days of sorrow and darkness overtake you and come upon you, when God shall drop into your souls a little of his wrath and displeasure, then it will be in vain to seek ease from the world. All your pleasures, treasures, and enjoyments here below, will all tell you that it is not in them to relieve you. You may as well seek to cure a wound in your flesh, by laying a plaster to your clothes! No; it is grace, that can then stand you in good stead with God: it is that only, that can reach the necessities of the soul. Without saving grace, all your riches and treasures are but dear vanities, precious vexations, that will stand by and see you perish, yes and perish eternally, but cannot supply and help you.

I come now to a Third thing, wherein the excellency and the riches of this Heavenly Treasure do appear: and that is,

***~~Because they are SATISFYING TREASURES; and so are not the treasures of the world.~~***

Solomon himself, when he had reckoned up many items for honors, and pleasures, and riches; yet, at the bottom of the bill, at the foot of the account, he casts up the total sum by two great ciphers. Says he: All is *vanity*and *vexation!* *Vanity*, in themselves; and *vexation*also, in the use and enjoyment of them. Those who make more reckoning of this treasure, will be mistaken in their account. And is this the price of your sweat and care? Is this the price of your early and late endeavors? Nay, is this the price of your sins, for which you destroy your soul and forgoest eternity? *What! to hoard up vanity and emptiness, to grow rich in vexation!*Will you stretch your conscience for that, which will never fill you, but only torment you forever? Are these the *great stately nothings*, that the whole world admires, and runs mad after?

Alas! you may as soon grasp your arms full of dreams, and hug your own shadows, as fill up the vast and boundless desires of your souls with these poor earthly vanities; that have scarcely any proof of their reality, besides the vexation and torment that they bring with them. These things are to the soul but as wind to the stomach: they may sour it; but they can never fill nor satisfy it. It is true, indeed, that you will find Esau, in [Genesis 33:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2033.9) seemingly satisfied with his present condition, when he tells Jacob, I have enough, my brother: but this was rather because he was ashamed to acknowledge his want, by receiving from a fugitive; than any real satisfaction, that drew this speech from him. No, there is such a paradox in an earthly mind, that makes it true, that though oftentimes they have too much, yet they never think they have enough.

But Heavenly Treasures are filling and satisfying Treasures! Though earthly riches are empty, though honors and dignities are superficial and windy, and crowns are lined with troubles, and scepters are made massy with cares set on them; yet heavenly riches are substantial—the crown of glory and immortality is lined throughout with the down of eternal contentment and satisfaction.

Now these Heavenly Treasures are satisfactory in two respects.

They are satisfactory in Themselves. And,

They put Satisfactoriness into Earthly Enjoyments.

So that *the soul that possesses Heavenly Treasure, finds contentment and satisfaction in every condition*.

***~~1. Heavenly Treasures are satisfactory in Themselves.~~***

He who enjoys them, needs look out nowhere else for happiness and contentment.

**(1)**The Treasures of Grace are thus satisfactory, where there is the light and evidence of assurance, to tell the soul how rich it is.

Grace, indeed may sometimes lie deeply hidden in the heart. When the soul is in the dark, under some gloomy fears or in a state of desertion, it does not then know that it has such a treasure; and, therefore, it cannot receive contentment and satisfaction from it. But, when the Spirit of God darts in a beam of evidencing light into the dark vault, this rich treasure discovers itself by its own shining.

Now, this shine of Heavenly Treasure is Assurance; and, when the Spirit darts in a beam of light to reveal it in the heart, when it sees how rich it is in love, in faith, in hope, and in all other precious graces of the Spirit, it cannot sufficiently prize and value its own estate. It is true, indeed, that a gracious heart never thinks it has enough: still, it is craving and laboring after more: still, it complains, that its graces are too weak, and those weak ones too few. Yet this *holy covetousness*carries no tormenting, perplexing anxiety and vexation with it: while it complains of the poverty of its graces, yet it prizes them above all the world; and thinks its estate to be infinitely blessed and happy, if it has but any degree of assurance.

Though the man be but poor and despicable in the world, yet ask him, whether he would change conditions with the greatest and the richest lost sinner on earth, he will tell you, No! He values his present estate above ten thousand worlds; nay, he would not lose the least degree nor the least morsel of his graces, for whatever enjoyments this poor world could offer him.

Such satisfactoriness there is in the Treasures of Grace! and well may it be so, for *grace with assurance is no less than Heaven let down into the soul*. And, therefore, it is remarkable in [Hebrews 10:34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2010.34). In the original, it is, "Know, that in yourselves you have a better and a more enduring substance in Heaven!" Those who are assured of the truth of their own graces, have a Heaven in themselves, a better and a more enduring substance in themselves; such discoveries of God, such sweet peace and tranquility of soul, such overflowing joys of the Holy Spirit, that Heaven itself is never able to bestow another kind of happiness than this is, though there they shall have it in fuller degrees and measure.

**(2)** The Treasures of Glory are infinitely satisfactory.

If there be so much in grace which is but the pledge, then how much more abundant satisfaction is there in glory that is the inheritance itself! [Psalm 17:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2017.15). When I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness. When I awake: that is, when I awake in glory, after the short slumber of death, then I shall be satisfied with the likeness and similitude of God.

Consider, here,

**[1]** The true reason of the vanity and unsatisfactoriness of all earthly things.

It is, because none of them are so good as the soul is; nor are any of them so great, as to be able to fill up the vast capacity of the soul. *The soul is like a wide gulf: throw in pleasures, and profits, and honors, nay the whole world—yet there is a vast hollowness in the soul still, that can never be filled up by these things.*Your souls are of a noble and excellent being; and, excepting angels, they are the top and flower of the creation: and, therefore, it is a debasement of them to cleave to anything here on earth which is worse than themselves. Now, so long as all things here below are less than the soul and worse than the soul, the soul cannot possibly receive satisfaction and contentment in them. But God is infinitely *great*—and, therefore He can fill the soul. And God is also infinitely *good*—and, therefore, He can satisfy the soul, so that it shall not desire anything above or besides him.

Consider,

**[2]** The soul is to be made happy, with the same happiness, with which God himself is to be forever blessed.

And must not this be infinitely satisfactory? Wherein does God's infinite blessedness consist? Is it not in the close, near, intimate, and immediate enjoyment and fruition of himself? *Is not God himself his own happiness?*Why this also is the happiness of the saints—a close, intimate, and immediate enjoyment of God.

Enlarge then, O Soul: spread forth yourself wide: make room for your own glory: you are to be made happy, with the same happiness that God himself is blessed with. He is blessed, in the eternal enjoyment of himself; and you shall be blessed, with the eternal enjoyment of God also.

Enlarge then, O Soul: spread forth yourself wide: stretch out your desires as wide as Heaven itself; for the God of Heaven will fill them. And is not here enough to satisfy? Certainly, that soul must be very necessitous, that an Infinite God and an Infinite Good cannot fill up and satisfy.

And, thus, you see that Heavenly Treasures are satisfactory in themselves.

***~~2. As Heavenly Treasures are satisfactory in themselves, so they make Earthly Comforts and Enjoyments to be satisfactory also.~~***

That soul that has laid up and made sure of Heavenly Treasure, finds satisfaction and contentment in every outward condition. He who enjoys most of Heaven, enjoys most of earth. Though others may possess more than he: and what he has not, contentment makes him not to want. What says the Apostle, in [Philippians 4:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%204.11)? I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content. And what can any man have more? If the Lord affords him but a little of these things, he is content; and, if he increases them, he can be but content. O what a blessed condition is this, that exempts a man from a possibility of being discontment, as to outward things!

Thus it will be with you, if you have laid up your treasure in Heaven. It will satisfy you, and make every outward condition satisfactory also; and that, for two reasons.

**(1)** It will beget in you light thoughts of all things here below.

You will rate them no higher than the Apostle does—but loss and dung: and will any man be discontented or troubled what befalls such things; what becomes of his losses, and of his dung and dross? Suppose a sweeping shower should suddenly fall, and wash away some loose dust that lies upon your ground—would you count this a loss of your land? would any of you be troubled at this, as being bereaved of part of your estate? Truly, to a child of God all the things of the world are no other dust; and, if a tempest of Providence suddenly sweeps them away, he is not troubled at it: he counts it no loss of his inheritance: the dust alone is washed away, but the land is safe still.

Truly, none in the world abound more with superfluities, than a Saint does. Take a Wicked Man, upon whom all the store and abundance of the world empty themselves; upon whom riches, and honors, and pleasures flow in, in a full tide, and all unburden themselves into his bosom. Yet, poor man! he has no more than he needs: and it is no wonder that he calls them by great names, this thing a Crown, and that thing a Kingdom and Treasure. Alas! these poor deceits are all that he has to please himself with, to *call little things by great and swelling names*.

But to a Saint who has nothing but food and clothing, even they are superfluities, while God and Christ is his: and, if God casts in more to him, he values them as mercies, but not as his treasure; or, if God calls them back again, he looks upon them not as a loss, but as a riddance. If you make a thousand ciphers, yet they amount to nothing: and add a figure of one to these, still they stand but for one: such are the things of the world to a child of God: all worldly enjoyments are but as so many ciphers in his account: he reckons only upon one God; and, therefore, he is at a point how God deals with him as to these things: if God gives or if he takes away, the Christian says, Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Thus, Beloved, if you have laid up your treasure in Heaven, you will have but slight thoughts of all other things besides.

**(2)**Treasure laid up in Heaven will make all things satisfactory to you, because every condition that you are in will be to your advantage.

Nay, you will look upon any condition that you are in as a condition of God's love. Every mercy that is bestowed upon you, is a love-token sent you by a gracious Father: the soul, that can say "God is mine," will be able to say, "This comfort and that mercy were given me from the love of God! I have his heart with it! I observed the countenance of my Father; and I saw him smile upon my soul, when he gave it to me."

Nay, are you deprived of these enjoyments? It is from God's love as well, and it shall be for your advantage. God saw that they lay too near your heart, and justled him farther from his seat and throne in your heart; and he would not allow you to make so bad an exchange as to leave heavenly things for earthly. So he takes these from you, so that he may take you from them, and wean your heart from them; and that he may strengthen your faith and dependence on himself, that he may inflame your affections after him; and that he may exercise your patience and humility in the lack of them. More, he then gives you the clearest, and brightest, and fullest discoveries of himself, and of his love in Christ to your soul! What advantageous do losses therefore, O Christian, you gain! Yes, to use the Apostle's phrase, you have but gained much, in this harm and loss. And, therefore, in every state and condition, a Christian who has laid up his treasure in Heaven, may well be content and satisfied; for all is to his advantage and gain, whatever it is.

And, so much, for the Third particular.

***~~Treasure Laid up in Heaven Will Secure to You the Enjoyment of All Earthly Comforts, So Far as They Shall Be for Your Good.~~***

This depends upon the latter part of the former particular. Our Savior has given his word for it, in [Matthew 6:33](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%206.33). Seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof; and all these things shall be added unto you.

First, seek the kingdom of Heaven: that is, lay up first your treasure in Heaven, make sure of heavenly riches first; and, then, all these things shall be added to you. When the great bargain is concluded in Heaven, between God and the soul, God never withholds these petty things of earth, but throws them in, as vantage and overplus, into the bargain. So you see in [Romans 8:32](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%208.32), "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" Is Jesus, the heir of all things ours; and can there be anything, that shall not be ours also? Has God freely given you his Son; and will he think much to give you other things, which are of no value and esteem, in comparison of that great gift, Jesus Christ? Has he given you hidden manna, angels' food; has he clothed you with the robes of Christ's righteousness; and shall you lack food and clothing? Are not these things necessary for you? Or, does God prize worldly things at a higher rate than the things of Heaven? You cannot think God does so, for you yourself do not prize them so. Or, does God so much disregard them, as to take no regard to supply your outward concernments? No, says Christ, your Heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. God does take special notice and regard of all your needs: he knows you have need of these things. You need not, O Christian, therefore envy the grandees and potentates of the earth, that rustle and make a noise with their greatness. *Believe it, were it for your good, you would be exalted up to their pitch, and they should be brought down to lick the dust of your feet!*

Consider but these two things:

**1.**All earthly things are to be accounted good or evil, only as they concern our eternal state and condition.

You will greatly be deceived if you look upon earthly things as they appear in themselves. Then you will call prosperity, and riches, and worldly abundance—good things. Then you will call poverty, and affliction—evil things; if you account and esteem them as they appear in themselves.

But consider these things as they relate to eternity, and then*poverty may be a mercy, and riches a judgment! God may bless you by afflictions, and curse you by prosperity!*He may bestow more upon you in allowing you to lack these things, than if he gave all the world's abundance to you.

It may be that *prosperity*may puff up your soul, and make it grow more estranged from God. It may be that *adversity*may humble you, and bring your soul the nearer unto God, and so conduce more to the eternal good of your soul.

Adversity, in this case, is good; and not prosperity.

This present life is nothing but a preparation for eternity. All that we here do, or receive, or suffer—is in order to eternity; and, therefore, all must be measured by eternity.

That is good, which tends to our everlasting happiness, be it poverty or misery. Whatever it is that increases our grace, that augments the stock of our heavenly treasure, that promotes the everlasting salvation of our souls—that alone is to be esteemed by us as good. What folly is it for men to roll and wallow in the profits and pleasures of this world, and hug them as good things—when indeed they are only snares and traps to their souls; and are only given to fatten them for the day of slaughter; and may every moment deliver them up to an eternity of torments, which will be fearfully heightened and enraged by the enjoyment of these things that they account *good*things!

Abraham tells Dives, that in his lifetime he received his good things; and Lazarus received his evil things. This is a strange providence of God—to bestow good things upon a hated Dives, and to inflict evil things upon a beloved Lazarus!

But read on, [Luke 16:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2016.25). But now Lazarus is comforted, and Dives is tormented. Oh, never call Dives' expensive and delicious fare, good things—for these end in eternal torment! Never call Lazarus' sores and rags, evil things—for these end in everlasting comfort!

"No," might Dives have replied with horror, "When I was clothed in purple and fine linen, I then received *evil*things! O cursed be all my pomp and riches! I see now the end of my purple linen—it was but to wrap me up in redder flames. My sumptuous fare served only to make the never-dying worm the more to feed on me! Oh, happy was the poverty of Lazarus, for he awakened in ease and happiness in Heaven. Then he was truly happy one, and not I, though I thought myself so; for, though I received an abundant measure of *worldly*things, yet received I no *good*things."

This, within a short time, will be the judgment of all of you, when you come to be judged and sentenced to an unalterable condition for all eternity! Oh, therefore, be persuaded to pass the same judgment upon earthly things now.

Consider,

**2.** Hence, if God denies any worldly enjoyment to his redeemed people, he denies it because it is not really good for them; because it will not conduce to their eternal happiness, which is the only rule and measure of earthly things.

Psalm 84, "The Lord gives grace and glory. No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly."

If God withholds anything from you, then you may conclude that it is not a good thing for you to have; but that it would be harmful to grace or glory, had God bestowed it upon you. Will you content to diminish the least degree of grace or glory, for the greatest accumulation of worldly enjoyments? If you would, you have never yet made grace or glory your treasure.

In [Psalm 68:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2068.19) the Psalmist says, speaking of God's mercies: Blessed be God who daily loads us with his benefits! But the people of God are still complaining that they are loaded with miseries and afflictions: there is as much of these laid on them, as possibly they can bear. But, how few are there who take notice of how God loads them with his benefits! In [Exodus 16:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2016.18), he who gathered much, had nothing left over; and he who gathered little, had no lack. Just so it is with the children of God: he who has more of these outward comforts, has but his measure; and he who has less, has his measure too. Every one had as much as he can bear: and what he has not, God withholds, lest it should hurt him; lest it should break him, instead of adorning him.

Every vessel cannot bear up with as large a sail as another; and therefore God will keep it from topling over. There is nothing that a child of God has not, but, if he had it, for the present it would be worse with him than now it is. Therefore, so much as you now wish were added to your present condition, so much you do virtually wish were taken off from your present grace and from your future glory; because God most wisely and exactly proportions these things here, so as that they may be most conducible and serviceable to your true happiness hereafter!

I now come to inquire:

***~~II. Whence is it that the children of God make Heaven and heavenly things their treasure and chief good?~~***

We see that our Savior here distinguishes them from earthly and ungodly men by this character: One lays up his treasure on earth, and the other lays up his treasure in Heaven. He who lays up his treasure on earth, is an earthly, ungodly man. He who lays up his treasure in Heaven, is the true Christian.

***~~I. First notice that, that which makes anything dear and precious; that which makes anything to be a treasure to the soul—is the suitableness and subserviency of it to Self.~~***

*Self*is the great judge of all our treasure; the value of it is reckoned according to this standard: when Heaven, and earth, and all things are laid before a man, Self comes in, and views them all, and sees what is useful for it, and accordingly sets a price upon it; and all things are slighted, and nothing is current with the soul, but as Self has stamped and printed its own image upon it. Therefore, in [Luke 12:21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2012.21) you find this expression, "So is he who lays up treasure for himself," if any man lays up treasure, he lays it up for himself. Whatever may preserve self, whatever may answer the propensities and inclinations of self, whatever may promote the cause and interest of self—that is a man's treasure and nothing else.

***~~II. Carnal and unregenerate self rates earth and earthly things as its treasure, because there is a suitableness and proportion in the one to the other.~~***

Earthly treasure is suited for an earthly self. Therefore the Apostle tells us, 1 Corinthians, 6:13 "Food is for the belly, and the belly for food"—that is, they are suited each to other. So earthly things are suited to carnal self; the things of this world are suited to a worldly mind; and a worldly mind is suited to the things of this world. Carnal self relishes no other things. If you bring spiritual things to him, he tastes no relish or sweetness in them. You may as well please a brute beast by whispering into his ears deep philosophical discourses, as you can please a carnal man by the discoveries of God and Christ. Talk to him of the world and of carnal concerns, and his ear tastes and relishes such discourse as this is; the reason is because *these things are accommodated and suited to that carnal unregenerate self* which is in man. The Apostle John tells us, All that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life: that is, *Pleasure*, *Profit*, and *Honor*—all center in this, to please and maintain carnal self, as all its interest, and all its concerns; therefore, this is made by wicked men their treasure.

***~~III. In the soul's conversion unto God, upon that great change that is made in a man's self—there will also be another value set upon things than formerly there was.~~***

***~~Conversion is the great shipwreck of the Old Man, and all his goods.~~***

***~~1. In conversion, there is a great change made in Self.~~***

The Apostle, in [Romans 7:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%207.17) tells us that it was no more he, but sin that dwelt in him. Formerly, before his conversion, "It was *I* that breathed out threatenings: I persecuted the Church: I raged and was mad against them: it was I myself who acted then. But, since my great change, it is not I that am guilty; no, not so much as of infirmities. No, it is not I who fails in the performance of what is good; not I, but sin that dwells in me." So that, in conversion, there is a mighty change which passes upon self: so that a man may say: it is not he, but sin; that body of corruption, that dwells in him.

It is true, in a regenerate man there remains much of corruption and of the old self: but yet, grace being the supreme prevailing principle, it will be grace which gives the self to a man; and then that which before was a man's self and was loved—now has become a traitor, and rebel, and enemy to that new self that is wrought in a Christian by regeneration.

***~~2. Man's self being changed in conversion, his Treasure must also necessarily be changed.~~***

The new regenerate self cannot exist and live upon its old treasure—all is but husks and swine's-food to the soul now, that is begotten anew, and born of God. The seed of God dwells in it; and, therefore, now it looks after that which is conformable to its divine original and constitution. What the Apostle presses the Colossians to, in [Colossians 3:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%203.1), If you are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above—is truly the necessary practice of every heaven-born soul. Whoever is born again, whoever is risen with Christ, will infallibly seek the things that are above. He will do it—there is a natural instinct in the new creature which carries it out naturally to spiritual and heavenly objects. Just as the new-born infant does by instinct seek after the breast, though it never before received nourishment that way; so the new-born Christian, that has imprinted upon it the divine nature, has such an impulse and instinct in it, that naturally moves it to spiritual objects, as the only suitable nourishment and good for the soul. Therefore, to intimate the tenderness of this new infancy, the Apostle tells us, as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word; the new-born babe receives nourishment no longer from the navel; and so the new-born Christian no longer creeps upon his belly, and licks the dust of the earth, but feeds upon and desires the sincere milk of the word. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and therefore will long and breathe after that which is spiritual; because it is spiritual, and bears a proportion to its own being.

In [John 6:63](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%206.63) says Christ, The words that I speak, they are spirit and they are life: that is, they are able to maintain you in life, that you may live upon them as sustenance. Why so? Because they are spirit and life: they are spiritual words suited to a spiritual soul, to a soul that is born again of the Spirit; and therefore fit to nourish you, and such as will keep you alive.

Look, as the angels live—so lives a Christian's spiritual part: it is the same good which is common to both—and that which they both desire, embrace, and entwine around. Can you bribe an angel by all the profits of the world? Can you entice him by all the pleasures of the world? Can you elevate and puff him up by all the honors and dignities of the world? No! all these things are below his nature, and he cannot descend to them. They are not suitable to him—he lives for his God, and eternally suns himself in the light of the beams of his countenance.

Just so, lives the new creature also. It is spiritual, and therefore clasps only about spiritual things. The world bears no more affinity and proportion to the spiritual part of a Christian, than it does to angels. But bring God, the Father of Spirits, and here both angels and new-born soul cling about the divine essence, and nestle themselves about him forever, and fill and satisfy themselves in him. Here is food suitable to their natures—a spiritual God, for spiritual things.

Indeed, sometimes the carnal part may throw in so much earth and rubbish, that may for a time bury the new creature under it. But when it is in its own element, it never ceases heaving and working, until it has gotten above earth, and gotten into the enjoyment of its God again.

So, then, because the soul is not self-sufficient, because it is an indigent creature, therefore it must have the addition of some other good to it, to eke out and supply its defects. And because the indigent and needy soul has, in regeneration, a supernatural principle implanted in it, therefore spiritual and heavenly objects alone comply and suit with it. These, therefore, are the treasure of the soul: and you see why it is that the soul accounts heavenly and spiritual things to be its treasure; because these things are suited to that heavenly and spiritual principle, that is implanted in the soul in conversion.

***~~Now, these things are its treasure:~~***

***~~(1) God himself.~~***

So God gives himself unto Abraham, [Genesis 15:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2015.1). I am your shield, and your exceeding great reward. So David reckons up what a large and great estate he had in the possession and enjoyment of God, in [Psalm 16:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2016.5). The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, and of my cup; you maintain my lot.

***~~(2) Jesus Christ is its treasure also.~~***

Buy from me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich! [Revelation 3:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%203.18). His blood, his righteousness, his merit—are an inexhaustible treasure; and all becomes ours, upon which we may live and exist. In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge—but what is this to us? Yes, these treasures of wisdom, that are hid in him, are made over unto us also. [1 Corinthians 1:30](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%201.30), He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Oh, how rich is a true Christian, who has such a treasury; and such a treasure, as Christ is, to be his treasure! You find in [Hebrews 11:26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2011.26) that Moses esteemed the *reproach*of Christ greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt; certainly, if the *reproach*of Christ be such a treasure, then what then is Christ himself; and all those glorious benefits, that accrue unto the soul in and by him?

***~~(3) The Promises also are a Christian's treasure.~~***

They are the *veins*wherein this gold runs! They are the *mines* wherein this unsearchable treasure is. The work of faith upon the promises, is to stamp this golden ore into ready money, for the present necessity of the soul: so faith lives on the promises.

***~~(4) A Christian's Graces also are his treasure.~~***

Yes, though we have this treasure in earthen vessels; yet it is heavenly and precious treasure. Yes, though there is much dross mixed with this gold; yet, still, it is precious faith, rich love, firm hope, tried patience. Yes, every grace, that shines in a Christian, is glorious. The crown of grace, as well as the crown of glory, has not a sparkle in it, but what is more precious than the world itself!

These are a Christian's treasure.

***~~III. I come now to make some IMPROVEMENT of this; to bring down what has been said to some Practical Use.~~***

**USE 1. Have you so rich a treasure laid up in Heaven? Then, O Christian, be conscious of your own worth in Christ.** Henceforth know yourself to be no contemptible person.

***~~Shall worldly men strive, and labor, and think none comparable to them—only because their heap of dung is bigger than another's?~~***

And shall you be low and abject-spirited, who have God himself for your portion, and Christ for your Husband?

Indeed, if you will value yourselves according to the world's estimation of you—then you are no better than the dross and dung of the world, and the off-scouring of all things. But see how the Scripture accounts of poor, persecuted, despised Christians: [Hebrews 11:37](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2011.37). They wandered up and down in sheepskins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented: a strange generation of despicable persons! but, says the Holy Spirit, of whom the world was not worthy! And how does David prize them, and call them, the excellent ones of the earth, [Psalm 16:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2016.3)! My delight is in the saints, and in the excellent ones of the earth!

Therefore, O Christian, begin to know yourself. Know what great *relations*you have: you are no less than the son of a Great King.

Know your great *possessions*: you have no less, at present, than the love and favor of God; and everything you have, you have it with a blessing: yes, though you have *nothing*in the world besides afflictions, yet you have that *nothing*with a blessing; and you rather enjoy, than suffer, those afflictions, that lie upon you.

Know your great *reversions*also: you are an heir of glory, a co-heir with Jesus Christ; and, what he has purchased for himself, he has also purchased for you: and you, in due time, shall be instated into that inheritance, whereof Jesus Christ is heir, and you also shall be co-heir.

Will you now, who have so vast a treasure as this amounts to, go drooping and disconsolate, as a helpless and hopeless person, when you lack nothing less than to pity those that scorn you? Let the world know that a Christian has all things in Christ. Let the world know and see this by your conduct. It was a noble and gallant speech of Paul, when he stood in bonds and fetters before king Agrippa, who sat upon the judgment-seat to sentence him: I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am." What! such a prisoner as you are? a strange compliment for a prisoner to use to a judge! yet you see how he values himself: he was not dazzled with Agrippa's crown and pomp; for he said not, "I pray God that I were as you are!" but, "I pray God that you were such a one as I am, and then you would be truly happy."

This is the value that every true Christian should set upon himself, when he is assured of the truth of his graces. He should count himself more blessed that any man in the world. This is to honor grace.

***~~USE 2. Let the world hence learn also, to beware how they despise the lowest of God's children.~~***

Men are apt to esteem of others, according to their visible estate in the things of this world: and, if here they be low and poor, they trample upon them as vile and despicable. But let such know that every one of these slighted and despised ones, is a great and rich person! They are rich towards God: they are God's jewels and peculiar treasure; and God also is their treasure and portion for evermore.

It is wealth, I confess, which makes all the noise and bustle in the world; and challenges all honor as due to itself alone. Says Solomon, The rich man has many friends. Well, let respect go by wealth; we are content to go and stand this trial. Solomon tells us, The heart of the wicked is little worth: it is of no value; and shall his estate be of worth and value, when his heart is not? The poorest Christian may weigh his blessings with all the world: let the world drop down millions of gold and silver, boundless revenues, and crowns and scepters: a poor contemptible Christian comes and lays down one God against all these, and beggars them. And shall this great and mighty Christian be despised and slighted by the world? You do not know him now; but hereafter you shall see him sitting on a throne, clothed with robes of glory and awful majesty; daunting the grandees of the world who shall then stand shivering before him, while he boldly sets his hand to the sentence of their damnation, and sends them to Hell with shrieks. How will they, with horror then cry out, "Is this that poor and despicable creature that we mocked and despised? Behold, now he is exalted—and we are thrown down to Hell!" Certainly, you will have other esteem and opinions of men at the last and great day, than now you have. Those who are honorable now, will be despicable. Those who are despicable now, will be truly honorable, if they belong to Christ.

***~~USE 3. This might also serve to discharge thunder in the faces of all those who are so far from laying up treasure in Heaven, that they lay up treasure in Hell!~~***

Such treasures as these are, the Apostle speaks of, in [Romans 2:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%202.5) who, after the hardness and impenitency of their hearts, treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Such, who sin as though the basket of their iniquities would never be full enough, and the heap of their sins never great enough; let these know, that *when they are done treasuring up sin, then God will begin to empty the treasures of his wrath and indignation upon them!*For every sin they commit, God sets down so much wrath upon their scores; and he will be sure to pay them all at the Last Day to the full.

***~~USE 4. Which is the use I principally intend; and that is for EXAMINATION.~~***

Let us now put it to the inquiry: "What is it, that we make our treasure? What is it, that we account our good things?" Our Savior, I told you, hereby distinguishes between wicked men and the children of God: the one lays up his treasure in Heaven; the other lays up his treasure on earth. Therefore, the query is, What is your Treasure? It is of great weight and consequence.

Now, because usually a man's treasure is kept hidden and secret, therefore we must the more inquisitively enter into the search of it: and, before the ransack is thoroughly made, few men, I fear, will be found rich and substantial men; but, more especially, *those that glitter most in the world, will be found to be but poor and despicable creatures.*

***~~1. Therefore, take that character that our Savior gives in the text: Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.~~***

Put it now to the question: Where are your hearts? Truly, man's heart is not in his own keeping, but it will go along with his treasure; and where that is, his heart will be also. And, therefore, says the Prophet, speaking of those who made worldly things their treasure: their hearts run after their covetousness. Worldly possessions were their treasure; and their hearts ran after them in covetous desires of them. The *worldling*seals up his heart in the same bag with his treasure. The *child of God*sends his heart to Heaven before him, where it lies as a precious deposit among all the rest of his treasure; and when he comes to Heaven, there he finds his heart among all those precious things that he shall enjoy. *That which your heart is most busied about and most taken up with, is your treasure.*Dive down now into the bottom of your heart, and see how its musings and imaginations work: are they chained only to the things of this world? do they trudge to and fro laden only with burdens of earth? When they come thronging about you, do they buzz nothing in your ears but some base lust or some worldly profit? If this be the constant and only employment of your thoughts, assure yourself your treasure is not laid up in Heaven; no, nor on earth; but, which is worse, it is laid up in Hell!

The thoughts of a child of God are still taking wing, and flying upward towards Heaven; and every one of them carries up his heart, richly fraught with divine grace. One thought is laden with the actings of *faith*; another, with the actings of *hope*; another, with the actings of *love*: and they never stopascending, until they arrive into the presence of God, and lay their rich treasure in his bosom. Then God again fills them with Heavenly Treasure; and bids one thought to carry a smile to the soul, and tell the soul how dear it is to him; by another thought, he conveys strength; and, by another, comfort; and sends all away laden with precious treasure to the soul.

If your thoughts traffic only in the world, your treasure is there. If your thoughts traffic in Heaven, then your treasure is in Heaven.

But you will say, "How can we judge of our treasure by our thoughts? Is not the far greater swarm of every man's thoughts vain and sinful?"

I answer: It is true that they are so. Some thoughts are vain and sinful: some thoughts are idle and impertinent: some thoughts are worldly: and some thoughts are wicked. Few, comparatively, are the holy and spiritual thoughts, that any man sends up to Heaven. We must not, therefore, judge by the crowd or numerousness of our thoughts; but, by the entertainment which they find in our affections, by the stay and abode which they make in our hearts. [Jeremiah 4:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%204.14). How long shall your vain thoughts *lodge*within you? It is not, what the sudden flashings of our thoughts are; though that indeed should deeply humble us: but, mark *what it is that your heart fixes and dwells upon*; what flowers these intellectual bees, your thoughts, suck most sweetness and honey from! When your thoughts have been foraging abroad, and bring home some sin, and present it before you, does your heart rise against it, and shut it out of doors, and do you shut your heart upon it? But when your thoughts bring home God and Christ, and the things of Heaven and eternity in their arms—do your affections clasp and entwine about them? Does your heart enlarge and expatiate to harbor them? Do you give up yourself, in full strength and latitude, to such heavenly thoughts as these are? This is a good sign that your treasure is laid up in Heaven, because you are so much there yourself.

But others again will say, "My thoughts are necessarily taken up with the world. My work devours them; so that I have no opportunity to sequester myself for heavenly meditation. Must I therefore be excluded from having my treasure in Heaven, because my thoughts are necessarily employed in the world?"

I answer:

FIRST. Of all things in the world, thoughts are most free.

There is no man's calling which does so confine him, but, were his heart and affections heavenly and spiritual, his thoughts would force a passage through the crowd of worldly businesses, to Heaven. Prayers are swift messengers, that need not much time to deliver their errand, nor much time to return again to the soul. You may point your earthly employments with heavenly meditations, ever now and then sending up a thought unto Heaven: and such pauses are no hindrance to our earthly affairs.

SECONDLY. It is the property of grace and holiness, when there are no actual explicit thoughts of God, then to be habitually in the fear of God; possessing the heart and overawing it, that it shall not do anything that is sinful or unfitting a Christian.

Therefore says the Wise Man, excellently, [Proverbs 23:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2023.17). Be in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Whatever business you have, the fear of the Lord may constantly abide, overawe, and possess your heart.

THIRDLY. Observe how your thoughts work, when you have vacancy and remission from your employments.

Are they spiritual, then? Do they betake themselves to God? Do they lock up themselves in their Heavenly Treasure? Do you spiritually improve your leisure times? David called to mind his song in the night, and his spirit made diligent search: when he awaked, he was ever with God. He slept with God in his thoughts; and he awaked with God again in his thoughts. Whatever employments a man has, he has some leisure time. When you have been drudging in the world, and have gotten a little vacancy and freedom from it, do you spend that little time in the thoughts of God and of the things of eternity? Or do the world and the things of the world interpose and take up your thoughts? If so, how can you say your treasure is there, when your thoughts and your heart are never there? As Delilah said unto Sampson, How can you say that you love me, when your heart is not towards me? Just so, how can you say that your treasure is in Heaven, when your heart and your thoughts are not there?

***~~2. A second mark whereby you may know where your treasure is, is this: That which bears the chief sway and command in a man's affections, is a man's treasure.~~***

Affections are the wings of the soul, that carry it forth to its several objects. These move to nothing more swiftly, strongly, and constantly, than to what is the soul's treasure. When your souls take these wings and fly abroad, follow them, and see what it is upon which they perch. As the eagle will hover over the carcass, so the affections will be still hovering over the soul's treasure. See now where it is your desire and love, your joy and delight—carry you forth. Is it only to the things of this world? Certainly, if these wings be clotted only with mire and dirt, if they only flutter up and down the surface of the earth and mount up no higher—then your treasure is not a Heavenly Treasure.

The affections of the children of God still ascend upwards; and bear up their hearts with them, until they lodge in that Divine Bosom where first they were enkindled! I need not tell those happy ones, what it is to have their hearts so extended in love to God and the things of God, as to cause a kind of ecstacy: what it is to have that joy springing up in the soul, that is unutterable. Yes, such unsupportable joys, as have melted them into ecstasies.

How infinitely would they now disdain, that any soul should be so grossly foolish as to prefer the world before, or equalize it with, God! Ten thousand worlds are not so much to them, as one momentary glimpse of God, in communion with him. Nay, they think their happiness so great, that though they do believe, yet they cannot conceive how it should be more and greater in Heaven itself. Then the soul claps its wings, and gladly would take its flight and be gone—it breathes, and breaks, and pants after God.

See what an ecstacy holy David was in: [Psalm 42:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2042.1), [2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalm%2042.2). As the deer pants after the water-brooks, so pants my soul after you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? Indeed the whole Psalm is the most mournful and pathetic composure in all the Scripture, of a heart, that beats and throbs after God, with vehement love and desire after the enjoying of him. And whence was this, but because God was the portion and treasure of his soul? He was the health of his countenance, and his God: verse 11. Wherever God and the things of God are made the soul's treasure, there will be proportionable affections drawn out to these things. Never was it known, that a treasure lacked affections.

"But alas," may some say, "I fear then that I have no share in this Heavenly Treasure. Never was I so strongly affected with the discoveries of God and Christ and the things of Heaven; never was I so taken and ravished, as with some temporal mercies and enjoyments. I could never feel such transports of spirit in communion with God, as you speak of. I could never feel such ravishments of love, nor such meltings and vehemence of desires to the things of Heaven, as I have often found in the concerns and in the enjoyments of the world. Never do I remember, that I rejoiced so vehemently in God, as in some new unexpected worldly good; or that ever I mourned so bitterly for sinning against God, or for the hiding of the light of God's countenance from me—as I have done for some worldly affliction. How then can I say that my treasure is laid up in Heaven, since earth and the things of earth have the sway and pre-eminency in my affections?"

This may possibly trouble some.

To this, therefore, I answer, That there are two things, by which the predominancy and sway of a man affections may be judged.

By their Passionateness.

By their Valuation and Esteem.

You complain that earth and earthly things have the predominancy and sway in your affections. But look what sort of affections they are: are they only your fondling affections? this may be so, and yet heavenly things be your treasure. Many times, so it is, that, what is superior in these may be inferior, nay almost contemptible, in your rational and judicious affections. Men may be fond of those persons, for whom they have not such solid and judicious affections, as they have for others. So is it here: a Christian's fondness may be more to the things of this world; when yet his judicious affections may be far more to the things of Heaven.

"But how shall we try this?"

**(1)**Observe, as you must not judge of your value and esteem of earthly things by your passionate affections to them; so neither must you judge of your valuing heavenly things, by your speculative judgment of them.

It is not enough, when you compare heavenly things with earthly, barely to pronounce heavenly things to be infinitely better and more desirable than earthly. Truly, every man's conscience tells him thus much. There is no man, whoever he is, that thinks of Heaven, but is withal truly persuaded, that it is infinitely more glorious than earth is; and, that the enjoyment of God, a crown of life and immortality, is infinitely more to be preferred than all the trash and trifles of the world. There is no worldling, when his conscience beckons him aside and whispers these things in his ears, but is convinced, and assents unto these things as truths. And yet this man's treasure is not therefore laid up in Heaven, because he judges, in his *speculative*judgment, that heavenly things are better than earthly. This is to say they are better, and to judge them so—but not to esteem and value them so.

And, therefore,

**(2)**The true valuation of heavenly things as the soul's treasure, lies in the practical part of the soul.

Valuation is a practical thing. I cannot be said to value an object, unless that esteem has some influence upon my actions, as relating to that object: either it will put me upon endeavors to obtain it, or stir up care in me to keep it. Mark 1 Peter 2:7, Unto you who believe, Jesus is precious; but unto them, who are disobedient.… he is a rock of offence. In the 6th verse, he tells us that Christ is precious in himself: I lay in Zion a … corner-stone, elect and precious. In the 4th verse he tells us that Jesus is precious to God, chosen of God, and precious. And in the 7th verse, he comes to show what esteem men had of him: to believers, says he, he is also precious; but unto them, who are disobedient.… he is a rock of offence. What is the reason, when he compares wicked men to believers, that he calls them *disobedient*persons, and not rather unbelievers? The reason is, because we must not look to men's outward acknowledgment, whereby they judge what is precious to them; for all will so pronounce God, and Christ, and the things of Heaven precious in their *speculative*judgment; but you must look to their *practice*, and see what influence this valuation has there. And, thus, Christ is not precious to unbelievers, because that esteem they have of him does not tend to practical obedience to him.

Examine, therefore, which has most influence into your life and practice: whether your Passionate Affections for the things of this life—or your Judicious and Deliberate Affections for the things of Heaven; for, thereby, you may, in part, guess what is your treasure. A small torrent runs very violently, and makes a loud noise; yet has not that strength in it that a river has, though it moves silently. So it is with the affections of a child of God: though they may run out violently towards the things of the world; yet have they not that strength in them, which there is in his sober affections for the things of Heaven.

How ever violent your affections are to temporal things; friends, children, estate, or the like: yet if you value and esteem heavenly things as your treasure, this valuation and esteem will have the sway and pre-eminency in two things especially:

**[1]**It will enforce the soul to use more diligence and care to increase its spiritual treasure, than to increase any temporal good thing whatever.

That is a man's treasure, to which he is still adding and throwing one precious thing after another; nor will he ever think it can be too full and too rich. And therefore you have that expression in [2 Peter 1:5-7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Pet%201.5-7), *Add*to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. See here how the Apostle strings up these pearls. Now, what is it that you are most careful and industrious to add unto? Truly, that which most men make their business, is to add house to house, and land to land, that their names may be exalted upon the earth. Suppose one should spend all his time in gathering up straw and feathers, could you reasonably think that he made God his treasure? Yet this is the foolish and busy care of worldly men, that they employ themselves in picking up straw and feathers, and think with them to build their own nest.

But there is *a holy covetousness*in a child of God, that makes him still to be gathering up heavenly riches: still, he is adding grace to grace. As to outward respects, he is well content to keep the station wherein Providence has set him: if he is at a standstill in worldly enjoyments, it is no great trouble to him. But he cannot bear a standstill in grace: there, he must be growing and thriving, and going forward: let his affections be set ever so eagerly upon his outward comforts, yet he is not so eager to increase them, as he is his Heavenly Treasure.

And, that it is so, appears in two things:

**1st.** In that he sets a higher price upon opportunities, for the increasing of his Heavenly Treasure, than upon any other seasons and opportunities whatever.

Oh, what gain and enriching does he make on a market-day for his soul! Sabbaths to him are precious: ordinances to him are precious. Why? Because, in them, he sees the glory of Christ displayed, and the fullness of the promises unfolded! because, by them, his faith is strengthened, his love is inflamed, his hope confirmed! He goes far more wealthy from them, than he came to them; and therefore it is an argument, that he labors to increase his Heavenly Treasure, because he sets a higher price and value upon opportunities, to increase that treasure, than he does upon any other whatever.

**2dly.** It appears, in that he is willing to stand at a stint in outward enjoyments, but he cannot bear a stint in grace.

He cannot live upon a set allowance there. Let God deal how he pleases with him in outward things, let him reduce him to a morsel of bread and to a cup of water—it is enough; just so that he gives him but a Benjamin's portion in himself. Let God seize upon all his temporals and take them away, just so that he does but instate him in a great possession of spirituals, he is content. "My body," says he, "can exist with a little; but my soul cannot. My spiritual charges and expenses are great, and multiply upon me daily: I have many strong temptations to be resisted, and many prevailing corruptions to be mortified, and many holy and spiritual duties to be performed; and how shall I be able to defray all this with no better a supply? My present stock is not able to maintain it."

Still he is complaining that he has too little to maintain him in his work, that he may be such a Christian as he aims at and would be: and, therefore, he cries out, "Lord, though I thank you for what I do possess;" yet he still craves more of himself: "You are infinite, and what is it to enjoy a little of an infinite God? More of your *Son*: he is all-sufficient: and what is it to have an insufficient portion in an all-sufficient Savior? More of your *grace*: that is free: and what is it to enjoy a limited portion of unlimited and boundless grace?"

This is the property of heavenly riches, that they make those who have them still to be covetous after more. The worldling adds heap to heap: and the Christian adds grace to grace, and one degree of grace to another; and thinks he has attained to nothing, until he has attained so far, as that there is nothing farther to be attained; and therefore he goes on laboring after more, until he does insensibly ripens into glory, and has nothing more for him to desire. If you value heavenly things now as your treasure, you will still be adding to this treasure; growing every day richer towards God.

**[2]**And, then, if you do practically value and esteem heavenly things as your soul's treasure, you will sooner part with all other comforts and enjoyments, than with this.

It may be, you cannot say that ever you felt such pangs of joy and delight in the enjoyment of God, as you have done in some outward mercy: you never felt such comfort in spiritual mercies, as you have in some outward comforts that providentially were bestowed upon you: and, therefore, you have cause to fear, that your treasure is here below, and not above.

But this is still to judge by the passionateness of your affections, that is as a disturbed water that cannot reflect your face aright. If you would judge truly, then put this question to your soul: "Soul, now that you do so vehemently delight in this comfort and in that enjoyment; which would you rather part with: this delightful comfort—or your God?"

Certainly, a child of God would have a holy indignation against himself, should he but debate the question. "Oh," will he say, "though God takes everything from me but himself, yet he leaves me enough to make me happy."

A saint's rational affections, consisting in the due valuation and esteem of heavenly things, will triumph over his more eager and passionate affections to the things of the world. Think with yourself now what is dearest to you in the world, and then set God and Heaven in the balance against them; and then you shall see, though earthly comforts may engross too much of your affections and lie near your heart, yet God and heavenly things still have the greatest sway and predominance in your affections, if you do truly value them.

Just so, for the commission of a sin: it may be, some outward affliction may cost you more passionate grief and tears, than the commission of sin has done. You never mourned, it may be, so bitterly for your offending of God, as you have done for God's afflicting of you. This you look upon as a bad sign that your affections are not so much to the honor of God, as to outward comforts and prosperity. Yes, but let me ask you: Would you rather fall into the same affliction, or commit the same sin again? Certainly, if you are a saint, you will soon resolve the question: "No misery or plague is so great as sin; and, though it be my folly thus passionately to lament under this cross and affliction, yet I would rather bear it, yes I would rather bear whatever God can lay on me—than knowingly to commit the least sin against my God." This is the judgment of a child of God: and therefore Job makes it the character of a hypocrite, that he chooses iniquity rather than affliction.

And so much for the Second Mark or Character.

***~~(3) See what it is that you most trust unto and live upon, when all other things fail you. That, certainly, is your Treasure.~~***

Men usually reserve their treasure to be their support at the last pinch and extremity. See the case of Asaph: [Psalm 73:26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2073.26), My flesh and my heart fails: and must not he therefore fail? has he anything else to support him? Yes: now comes in relief from his treasure: But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. He is my treasure; a treasure that will never fail me, and that never can be spent: he is my portion forever.

And, thus, every child of God, when other things fail him, when other props are taken from under him, will then support himself from his God, who is his portion forever. Micah had a true notion of God, though falsely applied to idols: You have taken away my gods.… and what have I more? Take from a saint all worldly comforts and all earthly enjoyments; and, if you ask him what he has more, he can truly say, "Yes: still I have more than I have lost: I still have my God!" But, were it possible that his God should be taken from him, then indeed what has he more? he has nothing then left him to support him and to live upon.

Can you, therefore, in all your distresses, find relief and comfort in your God? Can you, when all props fail you, betake yourselves to him; and find enough in him to support and bear up yourselves, when you have nothing in the world to depend upon? Can you then find enough in him, to live comfortably and splendidly? If so, it is a sign God is your treasure. When all other things fail, God comes in as the relief and support of that soul—that makes him to be his treasure.

**4.** Look, not only what it is which you value in itself; but that by which and according to which, you value both yourselves and others. That is your Treasure.

And, here, I shall lay down two things.

**(1)** If the soul has assurance, and knows beyond all doubt and fallibility that Heavenly Treasure is his, he will value himself according to that treasure.

Would to God, says the Apostle to king Agrippa, that you were such as I am. And so, 1 Corinthians 15 when he had spoken of himself in the 9th verse, I am the least of all the apostles.… not fit and worthy to be called an apostle; there he values himself as in himself: but yet, in the 10th verse, By the grace of God I am what I am—and what was that? why, says he, This grace received I not in vain, for I labored more abundantly than they all. Low was his esteem of himself; considered in himself, less than the least of all the Apostles. But considering himself in respect of grace, By grace, says he, I am what I am: and I am such a one also, as have received grace to labor more than all of them. And so, [Jeremiah 9:23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%209.23), [24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jeremiah%209.24). Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the mighty man in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches: he excludes all boasting from themselves; But, let him that glories, glory in this, that he.… knows me, that I am the Lord: let him value and esteem of himself according to that.

Now, do you prize yourselves by some outward privileges or worldly advantages? Do you think yourselves *somebody*, because you have riches and estates, or the like?

Or do you account yourselves worth nothing, more than what you are in respect of grace, more than what you are in respect of your interest in God, and in your Heavenly Treasure and riches? This is a sign that you do indeed make heavenly things to be your treasure, when you rate yourselves so much worth as you have of that treasure.

**(2)** If the soul lacks assurance, and so cannot value itself according to its interest in that Heavenly Treasure; if it cannot see its right and title to this Heavenly Treasure—then it values others according to their interest in that treasure.

It is not according to their estates or honor in the world, but according to what they have of Christ, and God, and heavenly things. A child of God who values heavenly things as his treasure, will value the men who have this treasure and these riches.

***~~USE 5.~~***

Several characters have been laid before you, for the examination of yourselves, whether you do value Heaven and heavenly things as your treasure. If now by those characters you have taken an account of your estate, you either find yourselves rich in this Heavenly Treasure, or not. If you cannot say, God and Christ and the great and glorious things of eternity are yours; if you doubt that Heaven is your treasury, and of all that rich and precious treasure it contains there is anything that you can call yours; let me then direct you to a twofold word of EXHORTATION.

That, above all gettings, you would chiefly labor to get a portion in this Heavenly Treasure.

That you would never rest satisfied until you have got a full assurance that this treasure is yours, and that you are enriched by it.

The one, is to those who are indeed poor in Heavenly Treasures; but think themselves rich and increased in goods, and to stand in need of nothing.

The other, is to those who are indeed rich in Heavenly Treasures; but yet think themselves poor and miserable.

**1.** To those who have no share in this Heavenly Treasure.

Is there such an infinite mass of riches available, not to sale, but to gift; riches inestimable, invaluable, and unsearchable; such riches, that he who would worthily describe them, must first go to Heaven and learn the tongue of an angel to speak accurately? Shall not this stir up and quicken your desires to get these riches?

What! Sirs, is there not a covetous person among you all? Is there not one that cares how to be rich? Has wealth become such a vile and contemptible thing with you, as to stand in need of other exhortations and motives besides itself, to commend it to your acceptance? No, certainly, riches have not lost their allurements, nor have men lost their covetousness. If I should tell you this day of rich purchases and large donations, of gainful bargains and the speediest and easiest way to grow great in the world, and of invaluable treasures that you might have for fetching—how would most men's ears drink in such golden eloquence as this is! "Oh, where, and how can I obtain them?" would be the question of all of you.

What then is the reason, that, when we set before you the glorious excellencies of this Heavenly Treasure, the least dust of which is enough to bankrupt all that the world calls precious; since it gives no less than crowns, robes, and scepters, God, and Christ, and glory, and immortality: then what is the reason that men's hearts generally are so frozen and cold towards these things? Why are they not covetous and earnest in seeking after these things?

Truly, the grand comprehensive reason is *flat atheism*. So many as are careless of this Heavenly Treasure—so many atheists are there in the world. Paul has told us that He who is covetous of earthly things is an idolater. Just so, I may tell you that he who is not covetous after heavenly things, he is a *flat atheist*.

But, more particularly;

**(1)** Men are not thoroughly convinced that there is indeed such a treasure; or that this treasure is so rich, and so precious and glorious as it is described.

And why is this, but because it is *hidden*treasure? Here they see what pomp and advantages earthly riches bring with them; but they never saw the state that an angel keeps: they never saw the glory of the spirits of just men made perfect: they never saw the court and attendance of the Eternal King: they have heard, indeed, mighty and strange things concerning all these; but what shall they do, if they prove but dreams and fancies? And why then should they trouble themselves about uncertainties? Possibly they are such as are described; possibly, they are not.

Truly, these are men's atheistic principles; and, though they dare not own and profess it, yet this is at the bottom of all that deadness and indifference which is in most men to the things of Heaven.

Now, although the bare possibility of the truth of these glorious things, and the little danger there is in attempting to obtain them, might prevail with rational men to put them upon earnest endeavors after them; yet, carnal desires and earthly affections striking in with these loose atheistic and carnal opinions concerning the certainty of these glorious discoveries—they sway them so powerfully to earthly things, that all their thoughts and care and contrivances are laid out upon them, to the neglect, yes to the contempt of heavenly and spiritual realities.

[Psalm 14:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2014.1), The fool has said in his heart, There is no God. It was but in his heart: it was but a thin film of a thought, that scarcely arrived at the form of a conception; yet see how this has influence into his life: They are corrupt; they have done abominable works; there is none that does good—not even one.

Oh beware, therefore, that you never entertain a thought in the leastwise derogatory to the infinite glory of Heaven: doubting or unworthy thoughts of Heaven will insensibly make you careless in your endeavors after it. Be therefore, firm and unshaken in this belief—that *heavenly glory is unsearchable, that heavenly riches are invaluable!*Yes, believe that whatever belongs to Heaven is infinitely beyond all that is here below! The more the eye of faith discovers and sees of these things, the more will the hand labor and be diligent in the obtaining of them.

(2) Another reason why men do not labor after this Heavenly Treasure, is, because they are not thoroughly convinced, that they stand in *need*of this Heavenly Treasure.

They say, with the church, [Revelation 3:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%203.17) that they are rich, and increased in goods, and stand in need of nothing; and know not that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. They *know*not, and therefore they *care*not for looking after this Heavenly Treasure. They do not see:
their need of grace to sanctify them,
their need of mercy to justify them,
their need of the promises to support them,
and their need of Christ to save them.

Who is it that cries out that they are undone, eternally undone, without these things? Who is it that is sensible of these things? They think a little of these things will go far, and what they have already is enough: and it is altogether as hard to make these men discontented with the poverty of their spiritual condition, as it is to make them contented with the abundance and fullness of their temporal condition. *Oh, that men were but once awakened to see the necessity that they stand in of this Heavenly Treasure!*

***~~But how should they be awakened?~~***

**[1]**Consider the great cost and expense which you must be at, if you will be saved.

It is true, if you resolve to perish, as poor as now you are, yet you are too rich a prey for the Devil: but, if you intend happiness and your own salvation, you must have a large and rich stock to trade withal. A poor and beggarly professor will never set up in Christianity. No, salvation is a costly thing:
many powerful corruptions must be subdued,
many divine graces must be acted,
many holy duties must be performed,
and what have you to bear out all this charge with?

See that expression, [Titus 3:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Titus%203.8) that they be careful to maintain good works: such good works, he means, as are conducible to salvation: to maintain such good works is so great a charge, as will beggar all the ability of nature, if you have not a Heavenly Treasure to defray it. You cannot, by the power of nature and all natural endowments, maintain good works. You are not able to act faith, and love, and patience, and humility, and self-denial.

I know it is both easy and pleasant, to think and hope that you shall be saved. But sit down first, and consider what it will cost you. Can your present stock carry you through good and evil report, through reproaches and afflictions? will it carry you through all? if not, will you yet say that you are rich, and increased in goods, and stand in need of nothing? Be convinced, therefore, that you are poor and insufficient creatures; and that you stand in need of abundance of supply from this Heavenly Treasure, to discharge this cost and expense that you must be at, if ever you will be saved.

[2] Consider the desperate debts you have contracted with the justice of God, and the deep arrears you are run into with the wrath and vengeance of God. How do you think to clear your account without a vast and infinite treasure to defray it?

Suppose God should take every sinner, this day before him, by the throat; and say to him, "Wretch! pay me what you owe me! I will no longer give you time."

"Pay you, Lord! why, what is that I owe you?"

**1st.**"You owe me huge and vast sums for all the Temporal Mercies you enjoy. You boast in the world, as though none were so great as you are. Yes, but you have not paid Me for anything that you have! Here is so much upon your account, for your estate. Here is so much you owe Me, for credit and reputation. Here is so much you owe Me, for protection and preservation. Here is so much you owe Me, for your life and soul. Yes, you owe Me for all these debts! Pay me now for all these; yes, and the utmost farthing too for all these debts—or else, lie forever in Hell."

Oh, that worldly-minded men would but seriously consider, that none of the good things which they now enjoy are upon free-cost: there must and will certainly come an after-reckoning. Then, perhaps, they will say that it is one of the worst bargains they made in their whole lives, when they were content to grow rich, when this *after-reckoning*comes and God shall call them to pay for all the temporal mercies and blessings and enjoyments which he lent to them.

**2dly.**You owe God for many thousands of Sins and Provocations against him, which you must make recompense and satisfaction for.

And therefore sins are called debts: Forgive us our debts. And how many thousand talents are you thus indebted to God! Every sin is a talent of lead, for its weight, to sink the soul deep into Hell. But it is a talent of gold for its price and satisfaction. God's law is transgressed—and how can you recompense for it? His wrath is provoked—and how can you atone for it? Your soul is forfeited to endless torments—and how can you possibly redeem it? The redemption of the soul is infinitely costly—and you are unable to pay a penny!

Tell me now, O Sinner, are you rich enough in yourself to discharge all these debts? Can you pay God to the full, for every *blessing*you have received? Can you satisfy him to the full, for every *sin*you have committed? Do you think still, that you have no need of a treasure to discharge all these? Possibly, by this time, you are convinced that you stand in need of a treasure: but, it may be, you think there is none rich enough to do all this. Truly, there is none but the treasure of the infinite merit of Christ; who, for those that believe on him, has paid off all their entire debt! So that neither God's blessings, nor yet their own sins, shall ever be charged upon them to their condemnation. They can plead, "Lord, here is a full price—the precious blood of your own Son! It was, indeed, your own free grace that bestowed him upon us, who is such a boundless treasure! We no longer desire to deal with you upon terms of *grace*; but upon most severe, rigorous, and strict *justice*. What *mercies*we have had were purchased for us by this price: what *sins*we have committed were satisfied for us by this expiation: and, therefore, we stand acquitted in law."

Thus may those who have a part in this Heavenly Treasure, make up their accounts with a great deal of confidence; when others who have nothing to discharge their debts with, shall be cast into God's prison, whence they shall never return. Be convinced, therefore, of the absolute need and necessity that you stand in, of this Heavenly Treasure.

**(3)**Another reason why no more labor after this Heavenly Treasure, is because there are so few men that are willing to go upon trust.

Truly, the riches of a child of God are in believing, in trusting: and, therefore, we have that expression, [James 2:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%202.5), The poor of this world are rich in faith. Now to be rich in faith alone, the world counts a fantastic kind of riches: they would rather be rich in present possessions: they know not the mystery of growing rich by believing, and having nothing earthly.

Now the people of God go on trust for their treasure: and that two ways.

***~~[1] Their treasures are Invisible.~~***

[2 Corinthians 4:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%204.18), We look not at the things which are seen; but at the things which are not seen. The greatest part of what a Christian enjoys lies in *invisibles*:
in the love of God;
in a saving interest in him;
in communion and fellowship with him;
in the actings of faith and dependence upon him.

Tell an earthly, carnal man of such a treasure as this, he wonders where the excellency of it lies: he sees not God, nor Christ: he sees not that sweet communion and fellowship that there is between God and the soul. The things of the world he sees; the pomp, and glory, and splendor of the earth—these are objects of his sense: they are sensible things: and therefore these are things that affect him. But he prizes not invisible things, because out of sight, out of mind.

**[2] Their treasure is not only invisible, but Future.** It is*to come*.

It is but little that a saint enjoys for the present: his great estate lies in hope and in the future. Now he lives, it may be, upon glimpses and half smiles of God; and very restricted communications of God unto his soul: he has only enough to make him to know what that inheritance is that he expects. Were it not that his faith tells him sometimes how rich and glorious his inheritance is, truly he could not live and exist upon his present incomes.

Now there is a body of sin and death that keeps him low and meager in his actual spiritual enjoyments: this bars him from the possession of his eternal estate. Yes, but when this old man dies, then there falls to him a large and glorious inheritance, then he is instated into the present possession of all his hopes, and then he can live as much by sight and sense as the men of the world now do.

Now this does not affect earthly men: they have somewhat for the present, and they care not for the future. The world is in their hands, but Heaven is afar off. As eternity is that which shall never end; so it shall never begin with them. And so, foolish creatures! while they are pleasing themselves with empty enjoyments here below, eternity comes upon them unexpected, and they unprovided for it.

And that is a Third Reason.

***~~(4) Few men are willing to come up to the price of this Heavenly Treasure.~~***

"Why, what is the price?" you will say. Truly, it is nothing less than all. In [Matthew 13:46](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2013.46) our Savior, speaking of the wise merchant, says, that when he had found the pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it. Now, though hereby is not required the actual renouncing of all, but only a disposition of heart to part with all, when they stand either in competition with or opposition to these heavenly things. Yet *men's affections are so glued to the world and the follies and vanities here below, that they count this a hard bargain; and they would rather forego God and Christ and the great and glorious things of eternity, than buy them at so dear a rate, as to be willing to part with them all for heavenly things.*

You see, then, what hinders men from making heavenly things their treasure. Beware that these things be not charged upon you, as your practical error, at the Last Day. Let me tell you, it will be sad and dreadful for you, to see poor despicable saints let in to the full possession of this treasure, which here they believed, and hoped, and longed for; and you yourselves, for cleaving to these vain and worldly enjoyments, to be shut out in eternal torments! What horror and dread will this cause within you!

Thus much, for the First branch of this Exhortation: Labor to get these Heavenly Things to be your Treasure.

**2.** The other branch is, Never rest satisfied without a full assurance that this Heavenly Treasure is yours; that you have a share in it, and a right to it.

[1] Consider, Without this assurance you can never live comfortably.

For, though it be sufficient for your eternal safety and security, that God is your treasure and your exceeding great reward; yet it will not be sufficient for your present comfort, unless you know and apprehend him so to be.

[2] Consider, Without this assurance you can never live generously, and as it befits a Christian.

That is, you cannot live above the world without assurance of salvation. You cannot live above the fears and flatteries, above the frowns and fawnings, of the world—unless you have assurance that God is your treasure. A Christian who knows that God is his portion, can do thus: he can rejoice in tribulation, and triumph in afflictions, and live splendidly upon his God, though all the things of this world fail him. [Habakkuk 3:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Hab%203.17), [18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Habakkuk%203.18), Although the fig-tree should not blossom, neither fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive tree should fail.… though the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there should be no herd in the stalls. What then? Must not he languish and perish with other men? No! Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation.

What is the reason there is so much base compliance, and cringing, and servileness to every principle of the world; but only because men have no assurance of any treasure, but what may be taken from them by men? I need not tell you what times we are now fallen into: they are perilous times, wherein nothing is worth the making sure; nay, indeed, nothing can possibly be made sure. We see changes and vicissitudes upon everything. Therefore we must make that sure, that alone can be made sure: and that is God, and heavenly and spiritual things. Then, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be hurled into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar.… and the mountains shake.… yet God will be our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble! [Psalm 46:1-3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2046.1-3).

**(2)** To those, that have had this full assurance, I shall only speak two words briefly.

**[1] Live upon your treasure**. By faith fetch in supplies from it, for all your exigencies and necessities.

Yes, live at a far higher rate than what the men of the world can do: so that they may be convinced that the poorest Christian has greater sufficiency, than all the world besides; that the world may be convinced, that a Christian has more in God, than the greatest worldling can have in all his worldly possessions.

***~~[2] Take heed of wasting and spending this treasure.~~***

Indeed, the main stock cannot nor shall not be spent: yet take heed of diminishing the heap. Be still *adding*to it, rather than *wasting*it. Truly, sin will both waste your treasure, and blot your evidences, and darken that knowledge and assurance that you have that this treasure is yours.

**(3)**I have but one word more: and that is, to exhort you to lay up your earthly treasures in Heaven—you cannot lay them up in a safer place.

But you will say, "How may that be done?"

Why, if you lay them out for the honor and glory of God and in his service, you shall thereby lay them up in Heaven. This is the way to carry earth to Heaven; yes, to make earthly comforts and enjoyments to be yours farther than the grave. We say commonly, "These things will go no farther than the grave with us-there we must part with them." No, lay up these earthly things in Heaven, by employing them for the honor and glory of God—and they shall and will go with you farther than the grave. And, though you brought nothing with you into the world, yet you shall carry them out of the world with you. See [Revelation 14:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2014.13), Their works do follow them—they enter into Heaven with them. And [Luke 16:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2016.9), Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. Mammon of unrighteousness: that is, earthly enjoyments; so called, because usually abused to unrighteousness. Make friends of them: that is, so lay them out for the glory of God and the good of others, that, when you fail, that is, when you die, you may be received into everlasting habitations, that is, into everlasting glory.

And thus I have finished this subject of Laying up Treasure in Heaven. May the Lord make what has been spoken profitable to your souls!