

EZEKIEL HOPKINS

THE
EXCELENCY
OF HEAVENLY
TREASURES

MONERGISM

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The Excellency of Heavenly Treasures

by Ezekiel Hopkins

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"BUT LAY UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES IN HEAVEN, WHERE NEITHER MOTH NOR RUST DOTHTH CORRUPT, AND WHERE THIEVES DO NOT BREAK THROUGH NOR STEAL: FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE WILL YOUR HEART BE ALSO." - MATT. 6:20, 21, 22.

INTRODUCTION

THERE is not a soul in the world so destitute and beggarly, but it hath somewhat that it may call, and doth esteem, its Treasure. Not only he, that hath, 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, that possesseth nothing but his own poverty, that hath no abundance but want and misery, such a one whom you would never suspect to be a hoarder, yet hath he that, the hopes and 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 Saviour 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 Exchequer; and what see you 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, St. John hath exactly cast it up, in 1 John 2:16 and it amounts to this sum: All, that is in the world, saith he, is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life: that is, there are Pleasures, suiting the propension of the flesh: there are Riches, for the greediness of the eye; for, What, saith the Wise Man, is laid up for the owners thereof, save the beholding of them with their eyes? and there are Honour and Dignity; that planetary, 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. Yea: but, saith 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 and hales 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: 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 doth infect, nor any violence intrude: therefore, lay up your treasure there: lay up your treasure in heaven.

And thus you have the scope of our Saviour 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, saith Christ, there rust doth not corrupt: that is, they are free and safe from all inward decays and perishing, from their own inward principle and nature.

And

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 and 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 torne and rent from us, yet are they moth-eaten comforts: the moth is got into them, and destroys them unperceivably. And, sometimes,

Secondly. By sudden violence; compared here to thieves breaking through and stealing good things and treasure away. An unexpected turn of providence doth, at once, many times snatch away all that men here prize and set their hearts on: and then, where is their treasure? In Hos. 5. we find God threatening, both these ways, to destroy Ephraim. In 5:12. I will be unto Ephraim, saith God, as a moth; and to the house of Judah as rottenness: that is, the Lord would consume them silently and unperceivably, as a moth eats out in the spots of a garment. And, 5:14. 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: some few years hence, 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? this throne and that brightness, this diamond and those stars, this robe and that sunbeam, all this precious and unconceivable 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 did belong to me; but, O my dim-sighted grace, that could not discover 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. There is a saying recorded in Plutarch, of a rich Roman, Crassus, that he did not think that man rich, that knew all that he had: truly, in this man's account, a Christian is truly rich: he hath laid up more treasure, than himself knows of. But, though a Christian knows not how much he hath, 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: there, only, the moth doth 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 centre 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 be on earth, your minds will be there also: you will grovel here below: the serpent's curse will be upon you; Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. But, if your treasure be 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 hazard 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 labour 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 only, that is rich towards God, layeth 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 himself hath 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 explication: I shall, therefore, only in brief enquire 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 endeavour, 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 enquiry 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 chiefest good, and accordingly to seek and labour 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:

Doct. That HEAVENLY AND SPIRITUAL THINGS ARE, AND OUGHT TO BE, OF THE GREATEST VALUE WITH EVERY TRUE CHRISTIAN.

Or thus:

A TRUE CHRISTIAN DOTTH 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 concernments? 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. Son, says he, remember that thou

in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things: but did not Abraham himself, in his lifetime, receive good things also? Might not Dives have retorted back again, "Wert not thou, Father Abraham, rich and potent on earth? Hadst not thou great power, and great possessions in the world? And, must I be tormented and thou glorified, when thou hadst a greater portion of them than myself?" No, the emphasis cuts off this exception: Thou, in thy lifetime, receivedst **THY** good things. "I received good things; but not my good things; not the chiefest that I valued. Comforts they were; but not treasures: and, while I possessed these good things, I sought after better; 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 Psal. 73:25. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth, that I can desire, besides thee. He was so far from desiring any thing above God, that he desires nothing besides God. What is there on earth, that I can desire besides thee?

See St. Paul also, in 1 Cor. 2:2. I determined not to know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified: but, especially in Phil. 3:8. 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 do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. Observe how the Apostle doth there contemn 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 tell you 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 every thing that is not his treasure. God and Christ, and the things of eternity, are his chief and choice good; and whatever he hath 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 a little inconsiderable spot. But, in the heart of a child of God, every thing 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.

I. To prosecute this farther, I shall endeavour to **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 CONVERSANT ABOUT IT**; and therefore, certainly, it is mighty precious itself. It bestows a lustre, excellency, and beauty upon every thing, that lies near it, or that hath 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! didst thou ever see the glory and riches, that there are in a promise? Wert thou ever ravished with that infinite sweetness and deliciousness, that thou suckest from them? Didst thou ever sit down amazed at the free and boundless love of God in them; that spake good to thy soul, for a great while to come, as David speaks? Didst thou 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, 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 be 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 be so sweet, what then will the ocean itself be? What says the Apostle, in 1 Pet. 2:7? 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 be 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 Deeds of Conveyance, 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 prospective-glass, 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 tells them out: and, therefore, St. Peter calls precious faith: 2 Pet. 1:1. To them, that have obtained like precious faith with us. You may look upon earthly treasure till your eyes be dazzled, yea, possibly, till 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, saith the same Apostle, than the gold that perisheth: 1 Pet. 1:7.

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.

ii. Heavenly Treasure is SOUL THEASURE, 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 want 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-meat 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 them: and therefore Christ justly brands the rich man in the Gospel for an arrant fool, who, when he had filled his barns with corn, said to his soul, Soul, thou hast 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, that at first were kneaded out of the dust and must ere 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 is not long hence, before your bodies shall never more know a difference, between treasure and poverty, between fulness 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, that now make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience to get them, will, ere 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: 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. And,

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, that is of a spiritual and immaterial substance.

Hence the Apostle, Eph. 1:3 blesseth God, who hath 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 favour, 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, Gen. 2:7 and, therefore, is of a very high degree of spiritualness. Now, bring spiritual things to spiritual: debase not thy spiritual and high-born soul, by matching it to the low and inferior things of the world: let not thy pure and spiritual soul be unequally yoked with the dregs and dross of any worldly enjoyment. God and Christ and the things of eternity are suitable to the soul: they are spiritual, like thy 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 will it protract and linger; and how loth 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, "must not I carry this estate and that treasure out of the world with me? Must we thus part for ever?" Yes, O Soul, for ever: for none of these things canst thou carry with thee. 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, but in the other world which is to come. In Prov. 8:18 says Wisdom, Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. Indeed, righteousness is this durable riches. When all things in the world stare on thee, and thou on them, and so take leave of one another eternally; yet then the love of God, interest in Jesus Christ, his divine and heavenly graces, these will then stand by thee and keep thee company, yea and enter into heaven, and there abide with thee to all eternity. It is true, thy faith, that is now a busy and active, grace, that like Moses doth 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 thy treasure, though thou dost lose thy faith; for, indeed, it is not so much the loss of thy 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 thy 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 thy happiness. It is true, here, the waters do only bubble, and they may and often do fail; but, there, thou shalt bathe thyself in an infinite ocean of delight: there, thou shalt lie at an ever-bubbling fountain of sweetness: God shall be eternally there, and thou shalt be eternally there: he will be eternally glancing and smiling on thee, and thou shalt be eternally warming and cheering thyself in that sunshine. Therefore, think with thyself, 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 till then, can thy treasure fail thee: never shall one star of thy crown twinkle, much less shall it ever be eclipsed. 1 St. Pet. 5:4. We shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away: it shall be for ever as glorious, orient, and flourishing, as it was at its first putting on. Indeed, eternity will be the perpetual beginning of thy 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.

2. As Heavenly Treasure is suited to the Nature of the soul, so also 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? Doth 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 raiment 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, that you have laid up in heaven. See that rich place, Phil. 4:19. My God shall supply all your need, 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 exigences 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, yea, too precious to be purchased by all these things, and it ceaseth for ever. When God frowns upon the soul, and conscience lours, and hell-fire flashes in the face of a sinner, how truly poor and miserable is that man, that hath 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. What would the soul then give for a Saviour, for a slighted and despised Saviour, to interpose betwixt it and justice? Believe it, then you will have other thoughts of the favour of God, of an 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 fancied 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 it is not in them to relieve you: you may as well seek to cure a wound in your flesh, by laying a plaister to your clothes: no; it is grace, that can then stand you in stead: it is that only, that can reach the necessities of the soul; and, without this, all your riches and treasures are but dear vanities, precious vexations, that will stand by and see you perish, yea and perish eternally, but cannot supply and help you.

iii. 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 honours, 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 cyphers: All is vanity and vexation, saith he: vanity, in themselves; and vexation also, in the use and enjoyment of them: they, that make more reckoning of this treasure, will be mistaken in their account. And is this the price of thy sweat and care? Is this the price of thy early and late endeavours? Nay, is this the price of thy sins, for which thou destroyest thy soul and forgoest eternity? What! to hoard up vanity and emptiness, to grow rich in vexation! Wilt thou stretch thy conscience for that, which will never fill, but torment thee? 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 earthly things; that have scarce 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: gripe it they may; but they can never fill nor

satisfy it. It is true, indeed, that you will find Esau, in Gen. 33:9 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 riches are empty, though honours and dignities are flatulent and windy, and crowns are lined with troubles, and sceptres 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 possesseth Heavenly Treasure, finds contentment and satisfaction in every condition.

1. Heavenly Treasures are satisfactory in Themselves.

He, that enjoys them, needs look out no where 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, is this treasure, that may sometimes lie deep hid in the heart. When the soul is in the dark, under some gloomy fears or in a state of desertion, it doth not then know that it hath 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 discover 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 hath enough: still, it is craving and labouring 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 prizeth them above all the world; and thinks its estate to be infinitely blessed and happy, if it hath but any degree of assurance: and, 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 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 filing of his graces, for whatever enjoyments a poor world could proffer 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 Heb. 10:34. Knowing in yourselves, saith the Apostle, that ye have in heaven a better and a more enduring substance: so our Translation renders it; but, in the Original, it is, Know, that in yourselves you have a better and a more enduring substance in heaven: those, that 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 tranquillity of soul, such overflowing joys of the Holy Ghost, that heaven itself is never able to bestow other 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, that is but the earnest, how much more abundant satisfaction is there in glory that is the inheritance itself! Psal. 17:15. When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy

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 honours, 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 any thing here that 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 any thing above or besides him.

Consider,

[2] The soul is to be made happy, with the same happiness, wherewith God himself is to be for ever blessed.

And must not this be infinitely satisfactory? Wherein doth 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 thyself wide: make room for thine own glory: thou art to be made happy, with the same happiness, that God himself is blessed with. He is blessed, in the eternal enjoyment of

himself; and thou shalt be blessed, with the eternal enjoyment of God also. Enlarge then, O Soul: spread forth thyself wide: stretch out thy 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 they are satisfactory in themselves, so they make Earthly Comforts and Enjoyments to be satisfactory also.

That soul, that hath laid up and made sure of Heavenly Treasure, finds satisfaction and contentment in every outward condition. He, that enjoys most of heaven, enjoys most of earth; though others may possess more than he: and what he hath not, contentment makes him not to want. What says the Apostle, in Phil. 4:11.? I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. And what can any man have more? If the Lord afford him but a little of these things, he is content; and, if he increaseth them too much, he can be but content. O what a blessed condition is this, that exempts a man from a possibility of being under affliction, 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 mean and light thoughts of all things here below.

You will rate them no higher than the Apostle doth; 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 upon a sudden fall, and wash away the 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; 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 only is washed away, but the land is safe still. Truly, none in the world abound more with superfluities, than a Saint doth. Take a Wicked Man, upon whom all the store and abundance of the world do empty themselves; upon whom riches, and honours, and pleasures flow in, in a full tide, and all unburthen themselves into his bosom; yet, poor man! he hath 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 hath to please himself with, to call little things by great and swelling names. But to a Saint, that hath nothing but food and raiment, even they are superfluities, whilst 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 cyphers, 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 cyphers in his accompt: he reckons only upon one God; and, therefore, he is at a point how God deals with him as to these things: if he gives or if he takes away, he says, Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Thus, Beloved, if you have laid up your treasure in heaven, you will have but mean and 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 love. Every mercy, that is bestowed upon you, is a love-token sent you by a gracious Father: the soul, that once 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 me." Nay, are you deprived of these enjoyments? it is from love, 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; and he would not suffer you to make so bad an exchange, as to quit heavenly things for earthly: he takes these from thee, that so he may take thee off them, and wean thy heart from them; and that he may strengthen thy faith and dependance on himself, that he may enflame thy affections after him, and that he may exercise thy patience and humility in the want of them: nay, he then gives in the clearest, and brightest, and fullest discoveries of himself, and of his love in Christ to the soul: what advantageous losses therefore, O Christian, dost thou sustain! yea, to use the Apostle's phrase, thou hast but gained in this harm and loss. And, therefore, in every state and condition, a Christian, that hath laid up his treasure in heaven, may well be content and satisfied; for all is to his advantage and gain, whatever it be.

And, so much, for the Third particular.

iv. 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 Saviour hath passed his word for it, in Mat. 6:33. Seek ye 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, betwixt God and the soul, God never stands upon these petty things of earth, but throws them in, as vantage and overplus, into the bargain. Yea, and as Christ hath passed his word, so God hath given you a pawn, that so it shall be, in

Rom. 8:32. He, that spared not his own Son, but hath given him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Is the heir of all things ours; and can there be any thing, that shall not be ours also? Hath 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? Hath he given thee hidden manna, angels' food; hath he clothed thee with the robes of Christ's righteousness; and shalt thou want food and raiment? Are not these things convenient for thee? Or, doth God prize worldly things at a higher rate, than the things of heaven? thou canst not think God doth so, for thou thyself dost not prize them so. Or, doth God so much disregard them, as to take no regard to supply your outward concernments? No, says Christ, your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. God doth take special notice and regard of all your wants: he knows you have need of these things. Thou needest 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 thy good, thou shouldst be exalted up to their pitch and they should be brought down to lick the dust of thy 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 things as they appear in themselves. Then you will call prosperity, and riches, and worldly abundance, good things; and want, and 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 thee by afflictions, and curse thee by prosperity: he may bestow more upon thee in suffering thee to want these things, than if he did give all the world's abundance to thee. It may be, prosperity may puff up thy soul, and make it grow more estranged from God;

adversity may humble thee, and bring thy soul the nearer unto God, and so conduce more to the eternal good of thy soul: adversity, in this case, is good; and not prosperity. This present life is nothing, but a preparation for and a tendency to eternity: all, that we here do, or receive, or suffer, is in order to eternity; and, therefore, all must be measured by it. That is good, that tends to our everlasting happiness, be it want or misery. Whatever it be, that encreases 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 dull 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 fat them for the day of slaughter; and may every moment deliver them up to an eternity of torments, which will fearfully be heightened and enraged by the enjoyment of these things that they account good things! Abraham tells Dives, that, in his lifetime, he received good things; and Lazarus evil things: a strange dispensation of God, to bestow good things upon a hated Dives, and to inflict evil things upon a beloved Lazarus! but yet read on, Luke 16:25. But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. Oh, never call Dives's purple and delicious fare good things; for these end in torment: never call Lazarus's 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 bravery: I see now the end of my purple, 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 awaked in ease and happiness: then, was he truly happy, 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 while, will be the judgment of all of you, when you come to be stated in an unalterable condition to all eternity: oh, therefore, be persuaded to pass the same judgment upon them now.

Consider,

2. If God deny any comfort or enjoyment to his people, he therefore denies it, because it is not good for them; because it will not conduce to their eternal happiness, which is the only rule and measure of earthly things.

Psal. 84:11. The Lord will give grace and glory: and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. No good thing: if any thing be withheld, you may conclude on it, that it is no good thing; but that it would be either prejudicial or inconsistent to grace or glory, had God bestowed it upon thee: and wilt thou thyself be content, to abate the least degree of grace or glory, for the greatest accumulation of worldly enjoyments? if thou wouldst, thou never yet madest grace or glory thy treasure. In Psal. 68:19, says the Psalmist, speaking of God's mercies, Blessed be God, that daily loadeth us with his benefits: 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, that take notice how God loads them with his benefits! in Exod. 16:18. He, that gathered much, had nothing over; and he, that gathered little, had no lack: so is it with the children of God: he, that hath more of these outward comforts, hath but his load; and he, that hath less, hath his load too; every one as much as he can bear: and what he hath not, God withholds, lest it should hurt him; lest it should break him, instead of adorning him. Every vessel cannot bear up with so much sail as another; and therefore God will keep it from toppling over. There is nothing, that a child of God hath not, but, if he had it, for the present it would be worse with him than now it is: and, therefore, so much as you do 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 doth most wisely and exactly proportion these things here, so as that they may be most conducive and serviceable to your true happiness hereafter.

II. I come now to enquire, WHENCE IT IS, THAT THE CHILDREN OF GOD MAKE HEAVEN AND HEAVENLY THINGS THEIR TREASURE AND CHIEF GOOD?

We see that our Saviour doth here distinguish them from earthly and ungodly men by this character: One lays up on earth, and the other in heaven. He, that lays up his treasure on earth, is an earthly, ungodly man: he, that lays up his treasure in heaven, is the true Christian.

i. Here, first, take notice, that, THAT, WHICH MAKES ANY THING DEAR AND PRECIOUS, THAT, WHICH MAKES ANY THING TO BE A TREASURE TO THE SOUL, IS THE SUITABLENESS AND SUBSERVIENCY OF IT TO THAT SELF, THAT IS IN A MAN.

Self is the great rater 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 hath stamped and printed its own image upon it. And, therefore, in Luke 12:21 you find this expression, So is he, that layeth up treasure for himself: if any man lays up treasure, he lays it up for himself. Whatever may preserve self, whatever may answer the propensions 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 for an earthly self. And, therefore, the Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. 6:13 meat is for the belly, and the belly for meat: that is, they are suited each to other. So are earthly things suited to carnal self; the things of this world, to a worldly mind; and a worldly mind,

to the things of this world. Carnal self relishes no other things: bring spiritual things to him, he tastes no sweetness in them: you may as well please a brute beast by whispering into his ears the deep discourses of reason, as you can a carnal man by the discoveries of God and Christ: talk to him of the world and of carnal concernments, his ear tastes and relishes such discourse as this is; and the reason is, because these things are accommodated and suited to that carnal unregenerate self, that is in man. The Apostle 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 Honour: all centre in this, to please and maintain carnal self, as all its interest, and all its concernments; 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 RATE AND 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 Rom. 7:17 tells us 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: still, it was I myself, that 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, that fail in the performance of what is good; not I, but sin that dwelleth in me." So that, in conversion, there is a mighty change passeth upon self: so that a man may say it is not he, but sin; that body of corruption, that dwelleth 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 that, that gives the self to a man; and then that, which before was a man's self and was loved, now is 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, his Treasure must also necessarily be changed.

The new regenerate self cannot subsist and live upon its old treasure: all is but husks and swine's-meat to the soul now, that is begotten anew, and born of God: the seed of God dwelleth in it; and, therefore, now it looks after that, that is conformable to its divine original and constitution What the Apostle presseth the Colossians to, in Col. 3:1. If ye be 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, that carries it out naturally to spiritual and heavenly objects: as the infant, that is new-born, doth by instinct seek after the breast, though it never before received nourishment that way; so the new-born Christian, that hath imprinted upon it the divine nature, hath such an impulse and instinct in it, that naturally moves it to spiritual objects, as the only suitable nourishment and good for the soul: and, 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 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, that is common to both; and that, which they both desire, embrace, and twine about: can you bribe an angel, by all the profits of the world? can you effeminate him, by all the pleasures of the world? can you elevate and puff him up, by all the honours 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 in his God, and eternally suns himself in the light of the beams of his countenance. 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 doth to angels: but bring God, the Father of Spirits, and here both angels and it cling about the divine essence, and nestle themselves about him for ever, and fill and satisfy themselves in him: here is meat 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 ceaseth heaving and working, till it hath got above earth, and got 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 necessitated soul hath, in regeneration, a supernatural principle implanted in it, therefore spiritual and heavenly objects only comply and suit with it. These, therefore, are the treasure of the soul: and you see whence it is, that the soul doth account heavenly and spiritual things to be its treasure; because 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 tells out, and gives himself unto Abraham, Gen. 15:1. I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. So David reckons up to you, what a large and great estate he had, in the possession and enjoyment of God, in Psal. 16:5. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

(2) Jesus Christ is its treasure also.

Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich: Rev. 3:18. His blood, his righteousness, his merit, are an inexhaustible treasure; and all becomes ours, upon which we may live and subsist. In him are hid 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 Cor. 1:30. He of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Oh, how rich is a true Christian, that hath such a treasury; and such a treasure, as Christ is, to be his treasure! You find, Heb. 11:26 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, what then is Christ himself; and all those glorious benefits, that do 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; the mines, wherein this unsearchable treasure is: and 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.

Yea, though we have this treasure in earthen vessels; yet is it heavenly and precious treasure. Yea, though there be much dross mixed with this gold; yet, still, it is precious faith, rich love, firm hope, tried patience. Yea, every grace, that shines in a Christian, is glorious: the crown of grace, as well as the crown of glory, hath 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 hath been said to some Practical Use.

USE i. Hast thou so rich a treasure laid up in heaven? Then, O Christian, BE CONSCIOUS OF THINE OWN WORTH. Henceforth know thyself to be no contemptible person.

Shall worldly men ruffle, and brave it, and think none comparable to them, only because their heap of dung is bigger than another's? And shalt thou be low and abject-spirited, that hast God himself for thy portion, and Christ for thy 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: Heb. 11:37. They wandered up and down in sheepskins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented: a strange generation of despicable persons! but, says the Holy Ghost, of whom the world was not worthy. And how doth David prize them, and call them, the excellent ones of the earth: Psal. 16:3! My delight is in the saints, and in the excellent ones of the earth! Therefore, O Christian, begin to know thyself. Know what great relations thou hast: thou art no less than the son of a Great King. Know thy great possessions: thou hast no less, at present, than the love and favour of God; and every thing thou hast, thou hast it with a blessing: yea, though thou hast nothing in the world besides afflictions, yet thou hast that Nothing with a blessing; and thou rather enjoyest, than sufferest, those afflictions, that lie upon thee. Know thy great reversions also: thou art an heir of glory, a co-heir with Jesus Christ; and, what he hath purchased for himself, he hath also purchased for thee: and thou, in due time, shalt be instated into that inheritance, whereof Jesus Christ is heir, and thou also shalt be co-heir. Wilt thou now, who hast so vast a treasure as this amounts to, go drooping and disconsolate, as a helpless and hopeless person, when thou wantest nothing less than to pity those

that scorn thee? Let the world know, that a Christian hath self-sufficiency; and that, at all times; and that he can live plentifully and splendidly upon his own stock: let the world know and see this by thy conversation. It was a noble and gallant speech of St. Paul, when he stood in bonds and fetters before king Agrippa, who sat upon the judgment-seat to sentence him: Would to God, says he, that thou wert such a one as I am: what! such a prisoner as thou art? 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, and all that fancy that he came with into the judgment-hall; for he said not, "Would I were as thou art!" but, "Would to God thou wert such a one as I am, and then thou wouldst 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 not count any man in the world better than himself. This is to honour grace.

USE ii. LET THE WORLD HENCE LEARN ALSO, TO BEWARE, HOW THEY DESPISE THE MEANEST 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 inconsiderable. 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, that makes all the noise and bustle in the world; and challenges all honour as due to itself alone: says Solomon, The rich man hath many friends: well, let respect go by wealth; we are content to go and stand by this trial. Solomon tells us, The heart of the wicked is little worth: it is of no price nor value; and shall his estate be of worth and value, when his heart is not? The poorest Christian may vie estates with all the world: let the world drop down millions of gold and silver, boundless revenues, and crowns and sceptres: a poor contemptible Christian comes and

lays down one God against all these, and begs them: and shall this great and mighty Christian be contemned and slighted? 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 a shout: 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, that are honourable now, will be despicable; and those, that are despicable now, will be truly honourable, if they belong to Christ.

USE iii. 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 Rom. 2:5 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 ephah of their iniquities would never be full enough, and the heap of their sins never great enough; let these know, that, when they have 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 iv. Which is the Use I principally intend; and that is for EXAMINATION.

Let us now put it to the enquiry: "What is it, that we make our treasure? What is it, that we account our good things?" Our Saviour, I told you, hereby distinguishes between wicked men and the

children of God: the one lays up his treasure in heaven; the other, on earth: and, therefore, the query is, What is thy Treasure? It is of great weight and moment.

Now, because usually a man's treasure is kept hid and secret, therefore we must the more inquisitively enter into the search of it: and, before the ransack be 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 Saviour 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: no; but it will go along with his treasure; and where that is, this will be also. And, therefore, says the Prophet, speaking of them that made worldly things their treasure, their hearts run after their covetousness. Worldly possessions were their treasure; and their hearts did run after them, in covetous desires of them. The worldling seals up his heart, in the same bag with his treasure: and a child of God sends his heart to heaven before him, where it lies as a precious depositum 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 thy heart is most busied about and most taken up with, is thy treasure. Dive down now into the bottom of thy heart, and see how the musings and imaginations thereof do work: are they chained only to the things of this world? do they trudge to and fro, every one of them loaden only with burdens of earth? and, when they come thronging about thee, do they buzz nothing in thine ears but intelligence, either from some base lust or some worldly profit? If this be the constant and only employment of thy thoughts, assure thyself thy 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 leave ascending, till they are got into the presence of God, and lay their rich treasure in his bosom: and God again fills them with Heavenly Treasure; and bids one thought 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 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 they are so. Some are vain and sinful: some are idle and impertinent: some are worldly: and some are wicked; and 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. Jer. 4:14. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? It is not, what the sudden flashings of our thoughts are; though that indeed should deeply humble us: but, mark what it is that thy heart fixes and dwells upon; what flowers these intellectual bees, thy thoughts, suck most sweetness and honey from: when thy thoughts have been foraging abroad, and bring home some sin, and present it before thee, doth thy heart rise against it, and shut it out of doors, and dost thou shut thy heart upon it? but, when thy thoughts bring home God and Christ, and the things of heaven and eternity in their arms, do thy affections clasp and twine about them? doth thy heart enlarge and expatiate to entertain them? dost thou give up thyself, in full strength and latitude, to such heavenly thoughts as these are? This is a good sign

that thy treasure is laid up in heaven, because thou art so much there thyself.

But others again will say, "My thoughts are necessarily taken up with the world: my calling 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. Thoughts, of all things in the world, are most free.

There is no man's calling doth 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. Ejaculations 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, as men do their writings with stops; 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 any thing that is sinful or misbecoming a Christian.

And therefore says the Wise Man, excellently, Prov. 23:17. Be thou 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? Dost thou spiritually improve the times of thy leisure? 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 hath, he hath some time of leisure. When thou hast been drudging in the world, and hast gotten a little vacancy and freedom from it, dost thou 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 thy thoughts? if so, how canst thou say thy treasure is there, when thy thoughts and thy heart are never there? as Delilah said unto Sampson, How canst thou say that thou lovest me, when thy heart is not towards me? so, how canst thou say, that thy treasure is in heaven, when thy heart and thy 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: and 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 light: as the eagle will hover over the carcass, so the affections will be still hovering over the soul's treasure: see now whither it is your desire and love, your joy and delight, do 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, your treasure is not a Heavenly Treasure. The affections of the children of God still ascend upwards; and bear up their hearts with them, till 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 loss, pain,

and torture: what it is to have that joy springing up in the soul, that is unutterable; yea, 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 fain would take its flight and be gone: it breathes, and breaks, and pants after God. See what an agony holy David was in: Ps. 42:1, 2. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth 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: v. 11. Wheresoever 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 wanted 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 transportations of spirit in communion with God, as you speak of; no such ravishments of love, nor such meltings and vehemency of desires to the things of heaven, as I have often found to the concernments and in the enjoyments of the world. Never do I remember, that I rejoiced so vehemently in God, as in some new unexpected mercy; 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 cross outward providence: and how then can I say, 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 violent Passionateness:

By their judicious Valuation and Esteem.

Thou complainest, that earth and earthly things have the predominancy and sway in thy affections. But look what sort of affections they are: are they only thy fondlings, thy violent and passionate affections? this may be so, and yet heavenly things be thy treasure. Many times, so it is, that, what is superior in these may be inferior, nay almost contemptible, in thy 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 be, that thinks of heaven, but is withal verily 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 here below. And 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 hath some influence upon my actions, as relating to that object: either it will put me upon endeavours to obtain it, or stir up care in me to keep it. Mark that place in St. Peter: 1 Pet. 2:7. Unto you, which believe, he is precious: but unto them, who are disobedient... he is a rock of offence: in the 6th verse, he tells us, Christ was precious in himself: I lay in Sion a ... corner-stone, elect and precious: in the 4th verse, he tells us, he was precious to God, chosen of God, and precious: and, in the 7th verse, he comes to shew what esteem men had of him: to believers, saith he, he is also precious; but unto them, who are disobedient... he is a rock of offence. What is the reason, when he opposes 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 in their speculative judgment: they will pass this sentence: but you must look to their practice, and see what influence this valuation hath there. And, thus, Christ is not precious to unbelievers, because that esteem they have of him doth not enforce them to obedience to him.

Examine, therefore, which hath 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 hath not that strength in it that a river hath, though it move 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 violent soever your affections be to temporal mercies; suppose friends, children, estate, or the like: yet if you do 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 Pet. 1:5, 6, 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 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 dwell alone upon the earth. Suppose we had lived in Solomon's time, when silver and gold were as common as stones in the street, if one should spend all his time in gathering up straws and feathers, could you in reason think, that he made God his treasure? yet this is the foolish and busy care of worldly men, that, though they might gather up that which is far more precious than gold and silver; yet they rather employ

themselves in picking up straws 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: and, though he thinks, to be the meanest Christian in the world is more worth than the world; yet he would not be content to be the meanest. As to outward respects, he is well content to keep the station wherein Providence hath set him: if he stand at a stay in worldly enjoyments, it is no great trouble to him. But he cannot bear a standing at a stay in grace: there, he must be growing and thriving, and going forward: let his affections be set never 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 doth he make on a market-day for his soul! Sabbaths to him are precious: ordinances to him are precious: why? but because, in them, he sees the glory of Christ displayed, and the fulness 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 labours to increase his Heavenly Treasure, because he sets a higher price and value upon opportunities, to increase that treasure, than he doth 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 pleaseth with him in outward things, let him reduce him to a morsel of bread and to a cup of water, it is enough; so he gives him but a

Benjamin's portion in himself: let him seize upon all his temporals and take them away, if so be he doth but instate him in a great possession of spirituals, he is content. "My body," says he, "can subsist 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 hath 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 thee for what I do possess;" yet he still craves more of himself: "Thou art infinite, and what is it to enjoy a little of an infinite God? More of thy Son: he is all-sufficient: and what is it to have an insufficient portion in an all-sufficient Saviour? More of thy 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 them that 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 hath attained to nothing, till he hath attained so far, as that there is nothing farther to be attained; and therefore he goes on labouring after more, till he doth insensibly ripen into glory, and hath 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 than other 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 thou dost so vehemently delight in this comfort and in that enjoyment, which wouldst thou rather part with; this delightful comfort, or thy 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 take every thing from me but himself, yet he leaves me enough to make me happy; and, in the enjoyment of other things, I were truly miserable, could I be made so by their loss." 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 thyself now what is dearest to thee in the world, and then set God and heaven in the balance against them; and then thou shalt see, though earthly comforts may engross too much, of thy affections and lie near thy heart, yet that God and heavenly things still have the greatest sway and predominancy in thy affections, if thou dost truly value them. And, so, for the commission of a sin: it may be, some outward affliction may cost thee more passionate grief and tears, than the commission of sin hath done: thou never mournedst, it may be, so bitterly for thy offending of God, as thou hast done for God's afflicting of thee; and this thou lookest upon as a bad sign that thy affections are not so much to, the honour of God, as to outward comforts and prosperity: yea, but let me ask thee, wouldst thou rather fall into the same affliction, or commit the same sin again? certainly, if thou art a saint, thou wilt 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, yea 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 chooseth 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: Psal. 73:26. My flesh and my heart faileth: and must not he therefore fail? hath he any thing else to support him? Yes: now comes in relief from his treasure: But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever: he is my treasure; a treasure, that will never fail me, and that never can be spent: he is my portion for ever. 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, that is his portion for ever. Micah had a true notion of God, though falsely applied to idols: Ye 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 hath more, he can truly say, "Yes: still I have more than I have lost: I have my God left me still." But, were it possible that his God should be taken from him, then indeed what hath he more? he hath 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 hath 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 thou wert such a one as I am. And so, 1 Cor. 15 when he had spoken of himself in the 9th verse, I am the least of all the apostles.... not meet 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 laboured 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 labour more than all of them. And so, Jer. 9:23, 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 glorieth, glory in this, that he.... knoweth me, that I am the Lord: let him value and esteem of himself according to that. Now, do you not prize yourselves by some outward privileges or worldly advantages? do you not think yourselves somebody, because you have riches and estates, or the like? do you account yourselves nothing worth, more than what you are in respect of grace, more than what you are in respect of your interest in God, and in that 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 want 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 honour in the world, but according to what they have of Christ, and God, and heavenly things. A child of God, that values heavenly things as his treasure, will value the men that have this treasure and these riches.

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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 exchequer, and of all that rich and precious treasure it contains there is any thing that you can call yours; let me then direct you to a Twofold word of EXHORTATION.

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

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

The one, is to them, that are indeed poor; but think themselves rich and increased in goods, and to stand in need of nothing.

The other, is to them, that are indeed rich; but yet think themselves poor and miserable.

1. To them, that have no share in this Heavenly Treasure.

Is there such an infinite mass of riches exposed, not to sale, but to gift; riches inestimable, invaluable, and unsearchable; such riches, that he, who would worthily describe them, must first suffer a translation, and learn the tongue of an angel to speak whole God at every word? and 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? Is wealth grown 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?" 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 and filings of which is enough to bankrupt all that the world calls precious; since it gives no less than crowns, robes, and sceptres, God, and Christ, and glory, and immortality: 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. Saint Paul hath told us, that he, that is covetous of earthly things, is an idolater: I may tell you, he, that 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 atheistical principles; and, though they dare not own and profess it, yet this is

at the bottom of all that deadness and indifferency, that 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 endeavours after them; yet, carnal desires and earthly affections striking in with these loose atheistical 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, yea to the contempt of heavenly and spiritual things. Ps. 14:1. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God: it was but in his heart: it was but a thin film of a thought, that scarce arrived at the form of a conception; yet see how this hath influence into his life: They are corrupt: they have done abominable works: there is none, that doeth good. 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 endeavours after it: be, therefore, firm and unshaken in this belief, that heavenly glory is unsearchable, that heavenly riches are invaluable: yea, believe that whatever belongs to heaven is before and beyond all that is here below: the more the eye, though but of a historical faith, discovers and sees of these things, the more will the hand labour and be diligent in the obtaining of them.

(2) Another reason why men do not labour 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, Rev. 3:17 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, 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 fulness 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?

Consider,

[1] 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 that they be careful to maintain good works: such good works, he means, as are conducive 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: are they 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, 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.

Consider,

[2] 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; and 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 thou owest me: I will give thee no longer time."

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

1st. "Thou owest me huge and vast sums for all the Temporal Mercies thou enjoyest. Thou vauntest it in the world, as though none were so great as thou art: yea, but thou hast paid for nothing that thou hast. Here is so much upon the account, for thy estate; and so much, for credit and reputation: so much, for protection and preservation; yea, for thy life and soul: yea, thou owest me for all. Pay me now for all these; yea, and the utmost farthing too for all these debts: or, else, lie for ever 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: and then, perhaps, they will say, 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 mercies and enjoyments that he lent them.

2dly. Thou owest God for many thousands of Sins and Provocations against him, which thou must make recompence and satisfaction for.

And therefore sins are called debts: Forgive us our debts. And how many thousand talents art thou 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 canst thou recompense it? his wrath is provoked: and how canst thou atone it? thy soul is forfeited to endless torments: and how canst thou redeem it? The redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.

Tell me now, O Sinner, art thou rich enough in thyself to discharge all these debts? canst thou pay God, to the full, for every mercy thou hast received? canst thou satisfy him, to the full, for every sin thou hast committed? dost thou think still, that thou hast no need of a treasure to discharge all these? Possibly, by this time, thou art convinced that thou standest in need of a treasure: but, it may be, thou thinkest 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, hath paid off all their score: so that neither God's mercies, 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 thine own Son. It was, indeed, thine own free grace that bestowed him upon us, who is such a boundless treasure: but, being instated in that, we do no longer desire to deal with thee 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, that have a part in this Heavenly Treasure, make up their accounts with a great deal of confidence; when others, that have nothing to discharge their debts withal, shall be cast into 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 labour 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. The poor of this world, rich in faith. Now to be rich in faith only, 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.

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

[1] Their treasures are Invisible.

2 Cor. 4:18. We look not at the things, which are seen; but at the things, which are not seen. The greatest part of what a Christian doth enjoy lies in invisibles: in the love of God; in interest in him; in communion and fellowship with him; in the actings of faith and dependance upon him. Tell an earthly, carnal man of such a treasure as this, he wonders where lies the glory and excellency of it: he sees not God, nor Christ: he sees not that sweet communion and intercourse, that there is betwixt 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 do 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 reversion: now he lives, it may be, upon glimpses and half smiles; and very restricted communications of God unto his soul: he hath only enough to make him to know what that inheritance is that he expects; and, were it not that his faith tells him sometimes how rich and glorious it is, truly he could not live and subsist upon his present incomes. Now there is a body of sin and death, that keeps him low and mean in his actual enjoyments:

this keeps him in nonage, and bars him from the possession of his estate: yea, 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 doth 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: Matth. 13:46. our Saviour, 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 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: Labour 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,

[1] 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] Without this assurance you can never live generously, and as it becomes a Christian.

That is, you cannot live above the world without it: not above the fears and flatteries, above the frowns and fawnings, of the world; unless you have assurance that God is your treasure. A Christian, that knows 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. Habbak. 3:17, 18. Although the fig-tree should not blossom, neither fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive 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 humour of men; 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 every thing; and, therefore, make that sure, that alone can be made sure: and that is God, and heavenly and spiritual things: and, 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: Ps. 46:1, 2, 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 exigences and necessities.

Yea, live at a far higher rate, than what the men of the world can do: that so they may be convinced, that the poorest Christian hath greater sufficiency in himself than all the world besides; that the world may be convinced, that a Christian hath 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 honour 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; yea, to make earthly comforts and enjoyments to tend upon you 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 honour and glory of God, and they shall and will go farther with you 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 Rev. 14:13. Their works do follow them: they enter into heaven with them. And Luke 16:9. Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. Mammon of unrighteousness: that is, earthly enjoyments; so called, because usually abused to unrighteousness. Make you friends of them: that is, so lay them out for the glory of God and the good of others, that, when ye 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. The Lord make what hath been spoken profitable to your souls!

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