

DAY BY DAY

Bible Texts and Topics, With Comments,
For Personal Study and Use at Family Worship.

3.10: TREASURE

1. THE HEART FOLLOWS THE TREASURE

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?” Matthew 6:19-26.

“Christ looks upon His people in their purity and perfection as the reward of all His sufferings, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory--Christ, the great Center, from whom radiates all glory. And we are permitted to unite with Him in the great work of redemption and to be sharers with Him in the riches which His death and suffering have won. The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonian Christians: "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? for ye are our glory and joy." 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20. This is the treasure for which Christ bids us labor. Character is the great harvest of life. And every word or deed that through the grace of Christ shall kindle in one soul an impulse that reaches heavenward, every effort that tends to the formation of a Christlike character, is laying up treasure in heaven.

“Where the treasure is, there the heart will be. In every effort to benefit others, we benefit ourselves. He who gives money or time for spreading the gospel enlists his own interest and prayers for the work, and for the souls to be reached through it. His affections go out to others, and he is stimulated to greater devotion to God, that he may be enabled to do them the greatest good.

“And at the final day, when the wealth of earth shall perish, he who has laid up treasure in heaven will behold that which his life has gained. If we have given heed to the words of Christ, then, as we gather around the great white throne, we shall see souls who have been saved through our agency, and shall know that one has saved others, and these still others, a large company brought into the haven of rest as the result of our labors, there to lay their crowns at Jesus' feet, and praise Him through the ceaseless ages of eternity. With what joy will the worker for Christ behold these redeemed ones, who share the glory of the Redeemer! How precious will heaven be to those who have been faithful in the work of saving souls!” Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 89, 90.

“A small girl who had been promised the privilege of climbing to a neighboring hilltop where her brother delighted to go, drew back in dismay when she came in sight of the steep and rough ascent. “Why, there isn't any smooth path up. It's all bumpy and stony!” she exclaimed.

“How would we ever get up if it wasn't?” demanded the more experienced brother. “The stones and hummocks are what we climb on.”

2. HONESTY IN DEAL

“Thou shall not have in thy bags divers weights, a great and a small. Thou shall not have in your house divers measures, a great and a small. But thou shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shall thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God gives thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God.” Deuteronomy 25:13-16.

“Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.” Romans 12:17.

“Now I pray to God that you do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that you should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.” 2 Corinthians 13:7.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Philippians 4:8.

“The Lord sees all the dealings of brother with brother, which weaken faith, and which destroy their own confidence in themselves as men dealing with justice and equity. In the most positive language He expresses His displeasure at the iniquity practiced in trade. He says, “Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?” Testimonies to Ministers, 372.

“The waiting ones who look for the soon appearing of Christ will not be idle, but diligent in business. Their work will not be done carelessly and dishonestly, but with fidelity, promptness, and thoroughness. Those who flatter themselves that careless inattention to the things of this life is an evidence of their spirituality and of their separation from the world, are under a great deception. Their veracity, faithfulness, and integrity are tested and proved in temporal things. If they are faithful in that which is least, they will be faithful in much.

“I have been shown that here is where many will fail to bear the test. They develop their true character in the management of temporal concerns. They manifest unfaithfulness, scheming, dishonesty, in dealing with their fellow men. They do not consider that their hold upon the future, immortal life depends upon how they conduct themselves in the concerns of this life, and that the strictest integrity is indispensable to the formation of a righteous character.

“Dishonesty is practiced all through our ranks, and this is the cause of lukewarmness on the part of many who profess to believe the truth. They are not connected with Christ, and are deceiving their own souls. I am pained to make the statement that there is an alarming lack of honesty even among Sabbath keepers.” Testimonies 4, 309, 310.

3. CARE OF THE POOR

“If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto. For the poor shall never

cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." Deuteronomy 15:7-11.

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." Psalm 41:1-3.

"There is sweet peace for the compassionate spirit, a blessed satisfaction in the life of self-forgetful service for the good of others. The Holy Spirit that abides in the soul, and is manifest in the life, will soften hard hearts, and awaken sympathy and tenderness. You will reap that which you sow. "Blessed is he that considers the poor."

"He who has given his life to God in ministry to His children is linked with Him who has all the resources of the universe at His command. His life is bound up by the golden chain of the immutable promises with the life of God. The Lord will not fail him in the hour of suffering and need. "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." And in the hour of final need the merciful shall find refuge in the mercy of the compassionate Savior, and shall be received into everlasting habitations." Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 41.

"Although Christ was rich in the heavenly courts, yet He became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich. Jesus honored the poor by sharing their humble condition. From the history of His life we are to learn how to treat the poor. Some carry the duty of beneficence to extremes, and really hurt the needy by doing too much for them. The poor do not always exert themselves as they should. While they are not to be neglected and left to suffer, they must be taught to help themselves." Testimonies 4, 550.

4. THE DIVINE POTTER

"The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear My words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? Says the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O house of Israel." Jeremiah 18:1-6.

"If men will but humble themselves before God, if they will not exalt their judgment as the all-controlling influence, if they will make room for the Lord to plan and work, God will use the qualifications He has given them in a way that will glorify His name. He will purify His workers from all selfishness, cutting off the branches that would entwine around undesirable objects, pruning the vine so that it will produce fruit. God is the great husbandman. He will make everything in the lives of those who are laborers together with Christ subservient to His great purpose of growth and fruit bearing. It is His plan, by conforming His servants day by day to the image of Christ, by making them partakers of the divine nature, to cause them to bear fruit abundantly. He desires His people, through actual experience in the truth of the gospel, to become true, solid, trustworthy, experimental missionaries. He would have them show results far higher, holier, and more definite than in our day have yet been revealed.

"The potter takes the clay in his hands, and molds and fashions it according to his own will. He kneads it and works it. He tears it apart, and then presses it together. He wets it, and then dries it. He lets it lie for a while without touching it. When it is perfectly pliable, he continues the work of making of it a vessel. He forms it into shape, and on the wheel trims and polishes it. He dries it in the sun, and bakes it in the oven. Thus it becomes a vessel fit for use. So the great Master Worker desires to mold and fashion us. And as the clay is in the hands of the potter, so are we to be in His hands. We are not to try to do the

work of the potter. Our part is to yield ourselves to the molding of the Master Worker.” Testimonies 8, 186, 187.

“In the still air the music lies unheard; In the rough marble, beauty hides unseen; To make the music and the beauty needs, The Master's touch, the sculptor's chisel keen.

“Great Master, touch us with Thy skillful hand; Let not the music that is in us die; Great Sculptor, hew and polish us, nor let, Hidden and lost, Thy form within us lie!

“Spare not the stroke. Do with us as Thou wilt. Let there be naught unfinished, broken, marred. Complete Thy purpose, that we may become Thy perfect image, Thou our God and Lord.” Horatio Bonar.

5. THE WAYS OF WISDOM

“He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.” Proverbs 4:4-13.

“Solomon declares that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Proverbs 9:10. Concerning the value and importance of this wisdom he writes: “Wisdom is the principle thing; therefore get wisdom. and with all thy getting get understanding.” Proverbs 4:7 “For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou can desire are not to be compared unto her.” Proverbs 3:14, 15.

The School of Christ: “He who is seeking with diligence to acquire the wisdom of human schools, should remember that another school also claims him as a student. Christ was the greatest teacher the world ever saw. He brought to man knowledge direct from heaven. The lessons which He has given us are what we need for both the present and the future state. He sets before us the true aims of life, and how we may secure them.

“In the school of Christ students are never graduated. Among the pupils are both old and young. Those who give heed to the instructions of the divine Teacher, constantly advance in wisdom, refinement, and nobility of soul, and thus they are prepared to enter that higher school where advancement will continue throughout eternity.

“Infinite Wisdom sets before us the great lessons of life, lessons of duty and happiness. These are often hard to learn, but without them we can make no real progress. They may cost us effort and tears, and even agony, but we must not falter or grow weary. We shall at least hear the Master's call, “Child, come up higher.” Counsels to Teachers, pages 50, 51.

“Lord, keep my eyes from off this world of sin, My courage falters and my faith grows dim;
Help me each day to understand and know with surety Thy way of truth below;
All is confusion here, I scarce can tell; Oh, guide me in the little things as well!
Lord, keep my eyes from off my fellow man. Low trails Thy banner, unfulfilled Thy plan;
Let me not measure him, dear Lord, by me, But ever strive to measure me to Thee;
Open my eyes, and fix my gaze to see Only my Friend, the King of Calvary.” Bertha D. Martin.

6. THE TWO TREES AND THEIR LESSON

“For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.” Luke 6:43-45.

“I saw that it is no light thing to be a Christian. It is a small matter to profess the Christian name; but it is a great and sacred thing to live a Christian life. There is but a little time now to secure the immortal crown, to have a record of good acts and fulfilled duties recorded in heaven. Every tree is judged by its fruit. Everyone will be judged according to his deeds, not his profession or his faith. The question will never be asked, How much did he profess? but, What fruit did he bear? If the tree is corrupt, the fruit is evil. If the tree is good, it cannot produce evil fruit.” Testimonies 1, 454, 455.

“There can be no growth or fruitfulness in the life that is centered in self. If you have accepted Christ as a personal Savior, you are to forget yourself, and try to help others. Talk of the love of Christ, tell of His goodness. Do every duty that presents itself. Carry the burden of souls upon your heart, and by every means in your power seek to save the lost. As you receive the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of unselfish love and labor for others, you will bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely.” Christ's Object Lessons, 67, 68.

“As a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he." Many thoughts make up the unwritten history of a single day; and these thoughts have much to do with the formation of character. Our thoughts are to be strictly guarded; for one impure thought makes a deep impression on the soul. An evil thought leaves an evil impress on the mind. If the thoughts are pure and holy, the man is better for having cherished them. By them the spiritual pulse is quickened, and the power for doing good is increased. And as one drop of rain prepares the way for another in moistening the earth, so one good thought prepares the way for another.

“The longest journey is performed by taking one step at a time. A succession of steps brings us to the end of the road. The longest chain is composed of separate links. If one of these links is faulty, the chain is worthless. Thus it is with character. A well-balanced character is formed by single acts well performed. One defect, cultivated instead of being overcome, makes the man imperfect, and closes against him the gate of the Holy City. He who enters heaven must have a character that is without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Naught that defileth can ever enter there. In all the redeemed host not one defect will be seen.” Messages to Young People, 144.

7. GIVING OF HER PENURY

“And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.” Mark 12:41-44.

“Jesus was in the court where were the treasure chests, and He watched those who came to deposit their gifts. Many of the rich brought large sums, which they presented with great ostentation. Jesus looked upon them sadly, but made no comment on their liberal offerings. Presently His countenance lighted as He saw a poor widow approach hesitatingly, as though fearful of being observed. As the rich and haughty swept by, to deposit their offerings, she shrank back as if hardly daring to venture farther.

And yet she longed to do something, little though it might be, for the cause she loved. She looked at the gift in her hand. It was very small in comparison with the gifts of those around her, yet it was her all. Watching her opportunity, she hurriedly threw in her two mites, and turned to hasten away. But in doing this she caught the eye of Jesus, which was fastened earnestly upon her.

“The Savior called His disciples to Him, and bade them mark the widow's poverty. Then His words of commendation fell upon her ear: “Of a truth I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast in more than they all.” Tears of joy filled her eyes as she felt that her act was understood and appreciated. Many would have advised her to keep her pittance for her own use; given into the hands of the well-fed priests, it would be lost sight of among the many costly gifts brought to the treasury. But Jesus understood her motive. She believed the service of the temple to be of God's appointment, and she was anxious to do her utmost to sustain it. She did what she could, and her act was to be a monument to her memory through all time, and her joy in eternity. Her heart went with her gift; its value was estimated, not by the worth of the coin, but by the love to God and the interest in His work that had prompted the deed.

“It is the motive that gives character to our acts, stamping them with ignominy or with high moral worth. Not the great things which every eye sees and every tongue praises does God account most precious. The little duties cheerfully done, the little gifts which make no show, and which to human eyes may appear worthless, often stand highest in His sight. A heart of faith and love is dearer to God than the most costly gift. The poor widow gave her living to do the little that she did. She deprived herself of food in order to give those two mites to the cause she loved. And she did it in faith, believing that her heavenly Father would not overlook her great need. It was this unselfish spirit and childlike faith that won the Savior's commendation.” *The Desire of Ages*, 614-616.

A LIVING BIBLE: His name is Bill. He has wild hair, wears a tee shirt with holes in it, jeans and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college. He is brilliant, kind of esoteric and very, very bright. He became a Christian while attending college. Across the street from the campus is a well-dressed, very conservative church. They want to develop a ministry to the students, but are not sure how to go about it.

One Saturday, Bill decides to go to the church. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, tee shirt, and wild hair. The service has already started, so Bill starts down the aisle looking for a seat. The church is completely packed, and he can't find a seat. By now, people are really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. Bill gets closer to the pulpit, and when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right on the carpet. By now the people are really uptight, and the tension in the air is thick.

About this time, the minister realizes that from the back of the church, a deacon is slowly making his way toward Bill. Now this deacon is in his eighties, has silver-gray hair, and a three-piece suit. He's a godly man, very elegant, very dignified, very courtly. He walks with a cane and, as he starts walking toward the boy, everyone is saying to themselves that you can't blame him for what he's going to do.

How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid sitting on the floor? It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy. The church is utterly silent, except for the clicking of the man's cane. All eyes are focused on him. The minister can't even begin preaching until the deacon does what he has to do.

And now they see the elderly deacon drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with him so he won't be alone. Everyone chokes up with emotion. When the minister regains control, he says, "What I'm about to preach, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget. Be careful how you live. You may be the only Bible some people will ever read."