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**“Commands of Jesus 6: Treasures in Heaven, Seek First KOG”**

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I remind everyone the reason we are examining the commands of Jesus is to help us in our progressive sanctification and not to gain our salvation. In that regard remember that obeying commands of Jesus is a measure of our love for Him: “*He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.*” (John 14:21)

Today we look at commands concerning our treasures:

Matt 6:19-21 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Matt 6:33 “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

The people to whom these verses were written would have thought of treasures, or wealth, to consist of clothes as well as objects of gold, silver, gems, wine, and land. The treasures would have been anything that benefited their comfort of life. The oriental people were strongly attracted to costly garments and this fact would have led to Jesus speaking of moths that would destroy such garments. Although today we mainly think of jewelry, lands, and houses, a Hebrew would primarily have considered his apparel so that he could make a great impression on his neighbors. Women also would have been attracted to expensive jewelry and they would have worried about thieves breaking into their houses to steal what they valued so highly. The Greek word translated as “rust” means anything that “eats into” and so would refer to anything that would destroy their valuables. Breaking into their homes would not have been very difficult since they were mainly made of clay, stones, and straw so that thieves could quite literally break into the walls of the homes.

It is too easy to get focused on earthly treasures such as job advancement, financial success, acquiring new cars, updating the home, etc. as well as secular family obligations, and we may not acquire much daily in the way of heavenly treasures. I placed “secular” in front of family obligations for a Christian should be spending time daily with Christian family obligations such as daily Bible devotions with family members. Of course the family must be kept functioning properly with regular obligations such as providing food, housing, transportation, health care, and appropriate clothing for all family members. However if we become focused on worldly things we then are serving two masters and Jesus warned us that such cannot be done: “*No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.*” (Matt 6:24) Peter also informed Christians of the reason they had been born again: “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you*,” (1 Peter 1:3-4)

Jesus tells us to seek first the Kingdom of God (KOG) but that does not exclude seeking other needed things. He also tells us to ask God for our daily bread (Matt 6:11), which means all items needed for living and not only literal bread. In Matt 6: 25-34 Jesus tells us to not be anxious about items needed for personal living but to seek first the KOG and all that is needed will be added to us. The main point being made by Jesus is that we should not become attached to worldly items for the day will come when we leave this world to spend eternity with God.

Whatever we do for Jesus will be credited for us in the KOG. Jesus elaborated on some items such as giving food, clothing, drink, and a place to stay to fellow Christians as well as helping heal sick Christians, and visiting Christians in prison (Matt 25:35- 40). In verse 40 Jesus stated that we did those things for Him when we did them for brothers of His, which means fellow Christians. In Matt 25:41-46 Jesus states that those who do not do those things for fellow Christians will be put into the eternal fire with the devil and his angels. Some people use Matt 25:31-46 to teach a social outreach to the world but that is not the application of these verses. Of course Christians should be sensitive to helping people outside of the church but our main obligation is helping fellow Christians.

The tithe is not commanded in the New Testament because the standard is 100%, not 10%. It is no longer I who live, so my focus should be outside of meeting my selfish needs and better serving the needs of those whom the Lord has directed to my attention: “*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me*.” (Gal 2:20) The giving of the time and material under my supervision must be directed properly. However, it is imperative that a Christian take care of his family: “*But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*” (1Tim 5:8) A husband must also love his wife as Christ loved the church (Eph 5:25). I am also obligated to use my spiritual gifts according to how God directs their use. Every Christian should know their spiritual gifts and pray daily for God’s direction in the use of those gifts.

The issues are commitment and priorities. Our commitment to Jesus is total – 100%. Our priorities are directed by Jesus and include family, other believers, and the world. Through prayer and obedience we can faithfully fulfill all that God requires of us.

If each Christian were to seek first the KOG and plan on building treasures in that kingdom, Christians and the church would be very different from whom they are today. We should begin each day with a prayer for God to continue to develop our understanding to be consistent with His perspective. Then we will begin to properly view our earthly belongings and know how we can better serve the Kingdom Of God.