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LAY UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES.

Every person you know and every person you don't know, is a treasure seeker.

A is seeking wealth; he rises early, labors hard and retires late, plans, studies, contrives, bends every energy of his being to get his prize. He would tell you that he does not care for money – does not worship it – yet poor man he is evidently deceiving himself; his actions speak louder than words. He would labor so for no person or thing he does not love.

B is seeking honor and respect; he bends his energy to that end; money nor ease nor any other thing would purchase his honor. He says "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. I will leave to my family a legacy of honor." He loves honor and shows it by his actions.

C is seeking pleasure: give him pleasure, jollity and mirth and he will give you his purse, his time, and sometimes his honor; this is a pleasure seeker.

D seeks for fame, and art or war, or science, or the pulpit, or stage are merely stepping-stones to the attainment of the treasure which he seeks; the applause of men – fame.

E loves office and power; he becomes a politician and seeks it as his prize. He drops business, family, pleasure, friends, ease; all go; all are sacrificed if need be to gain the prize of his ambition – this treasure he loves and seeks.

F has no ambition beyond the comfort of family and friends, and the social pleasures of home. Thought and muscle are taxed to this end.

G seeks approbation of others, and dress of person, or of children, and by act, word and look she studies to obtain this aim of her life. No labor is too great, no method too low, no time too valuable if she can excite admiration.

H loves self and seeks personal ease. He likes money because it will give him ease. He likes civilization and improvements because they will be of use to him; thinks favorably of wife, children, friends and servants, because they are useful, convenient and can assist him. He worships ease and loves it.

Dear brother and sister, here we have the pictures of the treasures of all our neighbors and friends. Are your treasures among them? Say not that your aim is a blending of these with others. The experience of the wisest men is, that success in life is attainable only by the concentration of aim and powers upon one attainment; that man's life is too short and his powers too feeble to reach several goals or prizes; to obtain more than one treasure.

Do I hear you say that the prize for which you are running is a heavenly one and that you are laying up your treasure in heaven? I am glad that when you hold these treasures up before your mind you recognize them all as earthly, which the moth and rust of time will soon destroy. I am glad if your hearts have not become so fond of these things, that you worship them and think them beautiful. But let me put it plainly: Would your neighbor judging from your daily acts not suppose that you are bending all of your energies for some of these prizes? Is he deceived, or are you, with reference to your real aim? Do not your actions, as well as his, speak louder than words – What is your real treasure – the thing which you really love?

The prize set before us in the gospel is far greater, far grander, far more pleasurable, far more honorable and far more rich than all of earth's prizes combined: and in addition it fadeth not away. If we obtain our prize we will have "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of

glory." If we reach the goal of our race, we shall be the bride of the Lamb – heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. "They (the world) seek a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible" one – "a crown of life [immortality] which fadeth not away."

Do you say that you expect to gain both this heavenly prize and also some earthly ones? Not so, not only does human experience teach that life is too brief, but God's word assures us that we "cannot serve God and mammon," (the world).

If these earthly prizes are obtained by so much effort, self-denial and perseverance, how about our great prize, should it not have yet more demand for our sacrifice of comfort, etc., in its acquirement? Yet, now look at it – your life labor; what is it for? You are a farmer, let me ask you, for what is your labor spent? I plow, sow, reap, raise stock, provide for myself and family, give to the support of religion, and lay up some each year by which I add farm to farm. What treasure did you lay up in heaven?

You are a merchant; let me ask you, for what is your life and labor spent? I attend to my business diligently early and late: I allow nothing to hinder it. By careful management and by giving it all of my time and ability, I am able not only to provide the comforts, but some of the luxuries of life for my family. I give a tenth of all my profits to the Lord in benevolent and religious ways, and besides I have accumulated considerable property. What treasure have you accumulated in heaven?

You are a tradesman or mechanic; how are you spending your life and labor? I give my time, labor and talent to my trade. I get as many of the comforts and luxuries of life as possible, and if I could would lay up some earthly treasure. I give my time and energy as fully or more so, than some who have better success. What time and talent have you expended seeking the heavenly treasures?

You are a housewife; how are you spending the life and labor consecrated to God's service? I spend it all in my household duties, and when I make home very comfortable, and do all the little things I can to make it elegant and tasteful, and to keep my children looking the picture of neatness, and receive and make some calls among my worldly friends, that together with my own personal adornment takes up all of my time. What treasure, what little things have you made ready for your heavenly mansion?

You are a widow – what are you doing with your life and talent consecrated to God's service? My life is an humble one, and my opportunity for doing good is on a small scale, but when I learned from God's word that I was redeemed from sin by my Lord and then heard of the high calling to be of the Bride of Christ, a joint-heir to an inheritance incorruptible ...that fadeth not away, I asked upon what conditions, I might be one. The word informed me that I was to make a complete consecration of myself, mind and body, talents, reputation, influence, to the Lord to be used thereafter as his and I was to be as one dead, so that with Paul I could say: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." So then, the will and talents, and all, would be his, and used by him. I had so little to give him; I have little talent, no money, and almost no influence, and almost feared I need not come, but the word assured me that what our Father wanted was my heart and my consecrated service, that he had plenty of money and reputation. So then I came: I gave myself all to him.

"All for Jesus! All for Jesus!
All my beings ransomed powers;
All my thoughts and words and doings,
All my days and all my hours."

When I had fully consecrated all, I realized that it must not be in word only, but also in deed. I therefore sought direction from the word

and prayed for understanding of it. I asked myself, does the Lord want me to go out into the streets and preach and expect food and clothing to come miraculously for myself and child? I found that God's will was, that I should spend some time and labor earning a living – that he that provideth not for his own household is worse than an infidel. I found too, that Paul labored, working with his hands, that he might not be chargeable to any. So I went to work as usual, knowing that if I was acting as God's agent, he wanted me to eat, and dress to his glory. Then came the query: shall I labor and save money, so that in a few years I can stop all kinds of labor, and give all my time to God's service? And again the word answered: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth" – and again: "Having food and clothing therewith be content."

Next I inquired, how comfortably shall I live; how much time shall I spend in the support of the old "earthen vessel," and how much could be devoted more directly to God's work. I ordered and regulated my time so that none of it might be wasted – eating, working and sleeping were all arranged with a view to the glory of God, and I found that I had three hours for my consecrated work. As already stated, my ability is not great and I wondered how I could make use of so much time. I said to myself it is of utmost importance that if I am God's representative and child, and going forth as his servant, that I should know as much as possible of Father's will. I must therefore, spend some of my consecrated time in feeding my new nature and embroidering my wedding garment. Father tells me to "search the scriptures," so with my Bible and my "WATCH TOWER," I daily spend one hour – not in reading, but in earnest study. I searched and found daily spiritual **[R186 : page 1]** food and my "daily bread" sometimes took two instead of one hour.

How should I use my other hours? I sought the WORD again. It said we were to spend our lives "doing good unto all men as we have

opportunity, especially to the household of faith," and I looked at Paul, Peter and Jesus [R186 : page 2] who said, "ye have us for examples," and "He hath set us an example that we should walk in his footsteps."

Yes this made my way clear; my chief object should be to give spiritual help, or secondly, any temporal aid or comfort to those needing it. If there were two needing, one a saint, the other a sinner and I could help only one, the preference was to be shown for the saint.

I first visited my next-door neighbor, who has sickness and trouble, helped her to straighten her home and spoke a word of comfort and cheer and pointed her to a shadow of a great rock in this weary land where she might find solace and protection from the fierce rays of affliction. I felt grateful to Father for thus permitting me to comfort a cast down one.

I next called on a lady of whose deep piety and christian character I had heard much, which led me to suppose that she lived very close to God. I wondered if she knew anything of God's great loving plan – of the Bride, the second company and the restitution of mankind in general to their former perfection, as the result of Christ's ransom. I found her zealous and earnest in the Lord's service but her zeal was not according to knowledge, for she loved mankind and seemed to fear that God did not; she was carrying burdens, etc., and I thought how much good it would do this dear sister of the household of faith, if she knew as we do, God's loving plan of salvation.

The thought occurred to me, you asked God to use you in his service, may be he is about to use poor you as his mouthpiece to tell this other dear child of his plan. The thought made me feel humble, for I realized my own littleness and I feared lest I should not so present the subject to her, as to avoid arousing her prejudices. Secretly I asked for wisdom. I introduced myself as a child of God and heir of glory come to spend a half hour in christian intercourse. We talked of personal

experiences and of the love of God manifested toward each of us, and I found no opportunity then of introducing much of the plan to her attention, merely suggesting that it would be blessed when the millennial reign would subdue evil and the "knowledge of the Lord fill the whole earth," and on leaving I gave her one of our new tracts – No. 1. – "Why will there be a second advent?" She thanked me, promised to read it, and invited me to come again, which I did, taking other tracts and our paper. That sister is now rejoicing with us in our grand hopes and says her Bible has become a new book to her.

Thus my time was spent from day to day, until the three hours were not enough and became four, and I doubt not if Father sees best he can so provide for our temporal wants that I can give all my days and hours in this blessed work. It sometimes brings reproaches and scoffs from those who misinterpret my motives, but "In his service pain is pleasure," and I rejoice that I am counted worthy to suffer reproach for the cause of the Master. It seems to bring me more close to him who set us the example, and I consider Him who endured such contradiction (opposition) of sinners lest I should be weary or faint in my journey in "the narrow way."

These five pictures represent persons who have consecrated all to God, who have covenanted to become dead to earthly aims, and ambitions and prizes, and have entered the list of those who will strive for "The prize of our high calling" and "seek for glory, honor and immortality" – the honor, the glory and the life promised only to the Bride – the overcomers, who keep their covenant.

Let us not deceive ourselves, brethren, into thinking that the Scriptures mean the opposite of what they say, when the message of the Master reads – "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth" – nor conclude that it has no meaning, when it says: "Lay up for

yourselves treasure in heaven." Think not when you are spending all your energies for self and money making, that you are following the instructions of Jesus, denying self and walking in His footsteps. He spent his time and energy in teaching and doing good to others.

Why, brother Russell, what strange views you hold on this subject. I fear you are erratic. Do you forget that the Apostle enjoins that we be not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord? Do you forget, too, that Jesus in the parable condemns the servant who hid his money in the earth, and commends those who traded with their talents and increased them? Would you have us stop business? Would you have us sell our property and give or throw it away? Are we not to be God's bankers, subject to his check or order?

No, dear friends, but I am convinced that in this particular all Christians have been led from the scriptural rule and instruction by the customs of the world, ably supported by the selfish principles of the old, fallen, human nature. When the Lord engaged with us and sent us into His vineyard, we said, I go, sir; and then supposed we were living up to our contract when we had done some labor one day in the week, spending six times as much of our time, and amazingly more energy, in the accumulation of our earthly treasure than in his service for heavenly treasure. And if this is so the sooner we look at the matter fully and honestly, the better.

I will answer your queries. I am aware we are not to be slothful in business, but is there not quite a difference between doing with your might what your hand finds to do, both in the Lord's service and in the proper care of these bodies, etc., on the one hand, and giving all your might and power.

"All your days and all your hours" in laying up earthly treasure (or trying to do so) and giving the hand no opportunity or time to do for the Lord. Should we not pay some heed to the portions of that text which require us to "serve the Lord and be fervent in spirit"? Should we so exaggerate the statement "not slothful in business," as to cause it to sap all the forces of our being, prevent our serving the Lord as we have covenanted to do, and cool off and starve out the fervency of our spiritual nature which we have no time to cherish or feed with God's word? Is this your understanding of "not slothful in business," my brother, my sister? No, I am sure it is not.

To your second question I answer: Yes, I remember the parable of the Talents given to the servants, etc. These talents represent our abilities. When you came into covenant with God you gave him yourself. If you were an orator, count that five talents; if you were wealthy, count that two; if you had some power to make plain to people in a private way, God's love, count that three; if you could do none of these things, but could speak a word of kindness and sympathy and pave the way for others to declare the riches of God's grace, count that one. These talents were yours and you presented them to God and He in turn handed them to you again, telling you to use them and increase them in his service. Thus he departed saying to us, as his church, "occupy till I come." At his coming he reckons with the servants and rewards them as they had made use of their abilities in his service.

Paul's talents we will suppose to have been oratory. If Paul had gone to tent making as a business, to make and lay up earthly treasure, or if he had used his oratory for the applause of men, or worldly wealth, it would have been the hiding of his talents in the earth. In a word the parable of the "Talents" shows that you and I are responsible for the best use in God's service of all talents we may possess.

Would I have you sell your goods and give or throw your money away? The money and goods you possess should be reckoned as the Lord's, and you should use it as his word directs – neither wastefully, nor carelessly, nor grudgingly; but "whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." But it is one of the mistakes we have made, to suppose that, "we are God's bankers, possessing either little or much of his money. He does not give it to us as bankers, but as stewards, and the difference is this: the banker keeps money and merely pays out when he receives an order from the owner. The steward is entrusted with the money to spend in the owner's service. So God makes all his children "stewards of the manifold grace (numerous gifts) of God." Some possess many, others few. According as they possess these gifts, they have a stewardship to fulfill in disposing of them. If wealth be one of these, it is your duty as a faithful steward to find ways and means of using it to God's glory. He has given us many ways and opportunities of doing this. It may be spent in spreading the truth, or in ministering to the necessities of the saints, or for the poor in general, or in any of a hundred ways that may be presented to your attention, and commend themselves to your judgment – "doing good unto all men as you have opportunity, especially to the household of faith."

Money is useless except as it can do some good to somebody, therefore, if you have it, use it. God is the great giver of all good, and wants his children to partake of this feature of his divine nature – love – benevolence.

Would I have you quit your business, quit your farm, quit your trade? That depends on circumstances: If you are devoting more time to your business than is needful for your necessities and the proper support of those who are dependent upon you, and the various avenues you may have for money in the Lord's service, then I should say stop

some of your business [R187 : page 2] and use the talent which would go to laying up treasure on earth in some branch of the Lord's service.

Are you wealthy? If so, I would suggest that you stop at once the work of money gathering and "heaping treasure for the last days," and go into the Lord's service with the same talents used in the service of self, and see if you can spend it as freely and as rapidly as you could make it. Make it your business to serve the Lord and then be – "not slothful in business." If you had lived in harmony with the commands of the Lord, it is altogether probable you would not now have so much. Make amends for past neglects – go into the vineyard and though it be the "eleventh hour," you may yet receive the "penny" (immortality).

But I am well aware that few of our readers are rich in earthly treasure. "Not many rich...hath God chosen, but the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom." What would I say to those not rich? I would say that probably you are not to blame for not being rich; perhaps you worked as hard, and planned as much, to get riches as some who did get them: perhaps you are not poor because you spent your time and talent and money in God's service, diligent in his business: How is that – ask yourself? If that has been your failing, begin anew, put forth your principle energies in laying up treasures in heaven. Let the principal work of life be, to render to God the things that are God's – the things which you covenanted to spend in his service – your all. If you thus "seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, all these (earthly things) shall be added unto you." Probably not many of the luxuries of life, but all necessities will be sure.

To the mothers and housewives let me say: Do not forget all other duties and privileges while attending to one. If we consecrate all to God and then in every act seek to know and do his will, I understand that every such act is accepted of him as done in his service. He has placed you in a responsible position; your first duty is to see to the comfort

and good of husband and children, and with such things God is well pleased. But do not forget that all is to be done as pleasing the Lord. Therefore remember the words of Paul regarding the dress, the hair, etc., both of yourself and your children, and so order your time that you will have some of it for partaking of spiritual food and some for ministering to others.

If you have means and can employ servants and thereby have your own time to spend in the work of the Lord, we would suggest that as a wise use of time and money to God's glory.

Finally, to all we would say: We recommend to your careful study and imitation example No. 5 – the widow – as being a practical illustration of the teachings and acts of Jesus and the apostles, and warn you to lay aside earthly treasure seeking, as calculated to weigh you down to earth and result in your losing the prize for which we are running and which we believe is so soon to be realized. Use earthly things – money, talents, reputation, all, as means to help you to make your calling and election sure, just as a man seeking earthly wealth uses every ability for the accomplishment of his ends. Let us lay aside every weight and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus.

Does some one object that so living and not laying up treasure on earth would lead to want when sickness comes? I answer, it would bring you into a position where your trust in God's promises would have opportunity for exercise. But living thus closely to God you could claim all of the promises. "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." "For we know that all things shall work together for good to them that love God (and show it by obedience to his word) to the called according to his purpose." Besides I suggest that sickness is spoken of in scripture as being largely the result of sin, and the work of "Him that has the power of death; that is, the devil." The whole world

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through sin has come under his control, but when any become disciples of Christ they are transferred out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. These, it would appear, are no longer subject to Satan except as his power may be permitted of Jesus and overruled for our good.

While our Lord may sometimes permit Satan to afflict his sheep for their development and perfection, sometimes, as in Paul's case, permitting "a thorn in the flesh as a messenger of Satan to buffet" them, yet we believe that as a rule if we were using our powers entirely and conscientiously in God's service we would not be so subject to sickness. "If we would judge ourselves, (see that we live in obedience to God's will) then we should not be judged of the Lord, but when judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." (1 Cor. 11:31-32).

James intimates the same thing when he says: "Are any sick among you...the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven." Jesus implied the same thing when, before healing, he usually said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." It is for us, however to follow the voice of our Shepherd and to trust him while we follow him.
