

**The
Heart
Of
The
Matter**

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And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible. Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. (Mark 10:17-30)

This is a study on the heart of the matter concerning things that are eternal and hindrances for sinners seeking eternal life. The passage from Mark 10:17-30 is the subject of the discussion. It concerns a rich man who went away grieved because the Lord told him to give up his wealth to follow Him after this man asked about inheriting eternal life. It is not necessarily targeted on wealth per se though the text here concerns a man of considerable wealth. It is this rich man who approached the Lord Jesus Christ to find out how to obtain eternal life. It is observed that the man knelt before the Lord and the Lord did not stop him. The Lord is of course worthy of worship. His approach was one of humility and sincerity. He acknowledged the Lord as Good Master and not just Master. Normally anyone would have called another person master and not good master. Moreover, there is no need to kneel before a person to make inquiry concerning any matter. But this man came kneeling and asking the Lord concerning this very important matter of eternal life. He called the Lord Good Master. Judas Iscariot is a case in point. He only called the Lord Jesus Master and never Lord. This man here called the Lord Good Master and the Lord told him there was none good except God. Unless Jesus is God, no one should be called good. No man on earth qualified to be a master let alone Good Master. For the Lord commanded: **Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. (Matthew 23:10)** There is none good except the Lord.

The Lord was directing this man to acknowledge Him to be truly God and not just a Master. This man who approached the Lord was a sincere seeker. He was also a serious seeker with a very serious question to ask. He asked how he might inherit eternal life. He asked what he must do to inherit eternal life. He did not want any obscure answer. He was not philosophical about the matter of eternal life. He believed there was eternal life and it was attainable. So he came asking the Lord and he wanted specific solution. He was interested in the doing part where he could perform something to inherit eternal life. His whole life was centred on doing something such as keeping the laws of Moses. In the Old Testament, the focus is on doing, if one has faith. No faith no works would result. However, works must never be taken for granted as one having faith. Works do not mean that one has faith in what he is doing.

This man wanted to know what else he must do because he was already a doer. He might be apparently tired of his present life. He wanted more, over and on top of all that he already had. He was not a poor man for he had great possession. But he wanted more. Why does he want more? Is not being rich good enough and should make a man happy and satisfied? So what if he was rich? He had to die someday and what would become of his wealth? He came to the same conclusion with Solomon that all was vanity. What would become of his wealth should he die? Would his descendents after him continue to preserve the wealth he had accumulated? Would his descendents squander away his wealth that he left behind? What would become of his effort then? Can he bring his wealth with him when he dies? So the question of inheriting eternal life was a pertinent question and one of great urgency.

He wanted to preserve his status and his wealth. He wanted continuance of his present status living forever in his wealthy state. He wanted to manage his wealth well too. He needed a financial advisor or perhaps he needed a wealth management guru to help him. Private bankers would love to service such clients. But financial advisors, wealth management experts and private bankers could not help him to obtain eternal life. These professionals might be able to bring this rich client to the greatest place on earth to indulge in the flesh, but obtaining eternal life is unlikely to be their cup of tea.

This man was not a fool when he approached the Lord. He must have done his research and heard about what the Lord had been doing; casting out

devils, healing the sick, restoring the blind, raising the dead and so on. The Lord must have all the answers; otherwise, he could not have performed such mighty works. He knew he would be approaching the right person for the answer. He might even have contemplated giving a great reward to the Lord for a suitable answer for him to obtain eternal life. Paying professional fees for advice was quite natural and what more to have the solution to obtain eternal life!

He was definitely approaching the right person. But the answer was not what he liked to hear. He was not a wicked man for he was a keeper of the Law. It was recorded that the Lord was beholding him and even loved him (v21). The Lord did not rebuke him for anything. The Lord's answer for him was very direct since he wanted to know what he must do. Since his emphasis was on doing, the appropriate requirements on doing were presented to him. The Lord told him the doing part from the Ten Commandments which he already knew and was doing and he prospered because of that.

Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. (Mark 10:19) The Lord did not tell this rich man to do something that he was already doing as though the Lord was ignorant of this man's work. This was the preamble leading to the crux of the matter concerning the question of eternal life. What follows would reveal this rich man's true intention and to what end would he be willing to go to obtain eternal life for which he was sincerely seeking.

And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. (Mark 10:20) So this man told the Lord he was already keeping these commandments from his youth but what else must he do? The age of this man was not revealed. In any case, this man had been keeping these commandments for a long time already. He was not ignorant of the commandments he must keep. But something was still missing. He did not get the whole picture. He was not disobedient to the observances of the Law. But he realized that keeping the Law alone was not good enough. This dilemma experienced by the rich man was well explained by the apostle Paul. **Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:20)** Notwithstanding, he was well brought up and a good man, humanly speaking. He was keeping the laws given to him from his youth. Ever since he understood what was required of him, he had kept them from his youth. He was not a careless and cavalier man otherwise, it would be unusual for him to be wealthy and keep his wealth.

The Lord then dropped a bombshell on him. Having dealt with him on all that he did and trusted, the Lord got closer home to where his heart really was. **Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor,**

and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. (Mark 10:21)

The Lord then hit him hard on his pocket when he replied that he had kept God's commandments. What if the Lord wanted his wealth, would he give it? What if eternal life indeed costs this man all his wealth, would he be willing to pay for it? What if the Lord wanted all your wealth, would you willingly give it back to Him? The thing that was lacking in this man's life was true charity. He was trusting in his own good works as well as in his wealth. He was out on an asset management and life lengthening pursuit. How many of us have no such fleshly inclination? Are we not as guilty as this man? This man had a mission that was to live forever in his wealthy state. Do the poor have such thoughts in mind to live forever in their poor wretched state?

Had he sold all that he had and gave to the poor, took up the cross and followed the Lord, he would have no lack anymore. This was something completely new to him. No professionals ever advised him that way. No precedents from the prophets that he knew of recommended such drastic measures to obtain eternal life. Was this man he called Good Master serious? Was the Lord joking with him? This rich man had been a keeper of the Law and perhaps, he might be quite familiar with the Old Testament. But the advice from the Lord took him by surprise. He wanted to know how to obtain eternal life and not to give up all his wealth and live in apparent poverty like Christ's disciples.

This was an amazing formula and not very palatable to the flesh and human logic. Who in his right mind would do such a thing? Who would not like to bask in luxury and ease? Who would want to take such risk by giving away his wealth to trust someone who simply promised him no lack? However, the Promiser was no mere man. The Promiser was the Lord who created the heaven and the earth who gave them the Ten Commandments to keep. Christ was the One who told them through the writings of Solomon to take care of the poor: **He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse. (Proverbs 29:13)** He might trust a promissory note from a banker or any party promising to repay him their debts than to trust in the verbal promise from the Messiah. This rich man was spiritually very poor for failing to recognize this man whom he called Good Master. He underestimated the Lord who gave him this formula

for eternal life. This formula for eternal life was actually quite simple but it required faith in the person who promised him.

The Lord told this rich man to follow Him but he would rather follow his own treasure – his immense wealth. He would rather be with his wealth than to be with Jesus, the Author of eternal life. So calling the Lord Jesus Christ Good Master did not mean he regarded Him as Lord of all. This man had been keeping part of the Ten Commandments concerning his dealing with his fellow men.

And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:1-6)

The first part of the commandments are concerning man's responses to God. There must be nothing a man must put between him and his God. God is the Supreme Being worthy of all our worship and adoration. So this man's wealth turned out to be his weakest link. His wealth became his god though he might not have recognized it. Wealth is very often a liability than an asset when a man has spiritual eyes to see. This man was unwilling to give up his wealth to follow the Lord. He wanted to know how to inherit eternal life but he was not willing to pay the ultimate price. He had been upright in his dealing with his fellow men but this did not cost him very much. Not only it did not cost him to keep the commandments, he prospered and increased in wealth because of this.

He was simply not harming others and defrauding others, which was already reasonable things to do. But concerning his own possession, he turned cold feet when he was told to give them up. His faith and his security were all tied up in his wealth. What if the Lord told him to give up his life instead of his wealth, would he give it in exchange for eternal life? Is life more important or wealth? This rich man was indeed a poor man concerning

spiritual things. He did not know or believe that true life is not measured by what he possessed.

So he did not buy the formula given to him and he went away grieved. How many sinners in the world would not trust the Lord but put their faith in their wealth and continue these few short years of self-preservation and indulgence? How long can a sinner preserve his earthly life with his wealth? What if giving up all his wealth can get him eternal life, would he do it? We know we cannot buy salvation with our wealth. The Lord here was dealing with the conditions of the heart of this man. His wealth was his hindrance to eternal life. No sinner can get saved by trusting in anything be it his wealth or fame or wisdom other than on the Lord Jesus Christ. A sinner must come to Christ completely bankrupt of all that he has whether wealth, wisdom or righteousness because the first commandment is thou shalt have no other gods before me.

And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. (Mark 10:22) This man went away grieved because his heart was in his wealth. Does being with the Lord Jesus Christ cause one to be grieved? Is it grievous to follow Christ? If the presence of Christ causes grief, the disciples of Christ must be a grieving lot of miserable men. He did not understand to be with Christ was truly eternal life itself. No man ever died in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. That was why the Lord told him to forget about all his earthly wealth and follow Him. The rich man was hoping for a more reasonable or suitable solution to obtain eternal life. He had wealth and he could easily pay for whatever solution offered to him but to give up all his wealth and followed the Lord with those fishermen was really too far fetched.

This is a sad case of misplaced faith. This is another manifestation of covetousness, which is idolatry. His earlier piousness and piety failed in the face of this most crucial test of his allegiance. His first and foremost allegiance was his wealth and personal comfort as well as luxury. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ was the furthest from his mind though he acknowledged Christ as the Good Master. Lips service was cheap. How tragic to trust in wealth than in the Person in whom is the treasure of all wisdom and power who spoke the world into existence. So the Lord concluded this with His disciples: **And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! (Mark 10:23)**

This is a fact. The rich do not need God. The rich may say, "I have two properties, three cars and a yacht so what can your religion do for me?"

The wise man may say, “I have wisdom and qualifications, why should I submit to a Book that is outdated and devoid of present reality?” Sinners refused to receive Christ because Christ will interfere with their lives. This is true and no man can get saved until he comes to the end of himself having to trust in Christ and Christ alone. The rich have all that heart could wish in this life. Wealth has blinded their eyes to their real need beyond this earthly life. This is sad but true.

In contrast, the poor are usually rich in faith. Unlike the rich, the poor would never contemplate on preserving their earthly life living in perpetual poverty. The poor would rather get out of their state of poverty. Only the rich would think about preserving their wealth and live forever on earth. Those who preach the prosperity gospel are Satan’s agents. Those who point men to riches instead of Christ have been deceived by the devil. Those who mock the poor and exalt the rich are abominable to God. **For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Timothy 6:10)**

Since it was so hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of God, the disciples were obviously concerned. “How then can the rich be saved?” they asked. What is impossible with men is possible with God. There were rich men who got saved in the Scriptures. Those rich men who got saved as recorded in the New Testament were rich in good works. Their riches did not hinder them in serving their Lord. Barnabas used his wealth for God’s service. Because of this incident, the disciples began to re-evaluate where they stood on this matter. **Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. (Mark 10:28)**

This was a valid question. They had indeed left all to follow the Lord. They were comparing themselves with this man who refused to leave his all and follow the Lord like them. If this man failed to enter the kingdom of God, what about them? They wanted an answer for their sacrifice. The kingdom was about to become a reality so they felt a need to know. They had invested everything on this Person whom they believed was the Son of David, the Messiah who would become King in Israel. They had sold all they had for this pearl of great price that they discovered.

Faith led them to give up everything clinging onto the Lord, took up the cross and followed Him. They had works to back up their faith and they were true doers of the word. They had a right to know their status for having forsaken all to follow the Lord. They were not like the rich man claiming that they had kept the commandments from their youth. The Lord did not rebuke them for asking about this matter. They were not disappointed like this rich man either.

And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. (Mark 10:29&30)

The promise of rewards was far greater than what they had expected. All the years they had followed the Lord during His earthly ministry, they had no lack. They were clothed and they were fed, sometimes miraculously. Even their taxes were taken care of through a creature from the sea. Protection and provision were guaranteed. They saw the powers of God in great signs and wonders like the days in Egypt under this Prophet greater

than Moses. They were firsthand witnesses concerning the coming power of the kingdom of God. They had indeed forsaken all.

The Lord told them not one who had forsaken all would lose out. They would receive many folds whether they had forsaken brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for Christ's sake, and the gospel's sake. They would be properly recompensed for all that they had left. For the brethren they lose they would get back many brethren in return. For the sisters they lose they would get back many sisters in return. For the parents they lose they would get back many parents in return. For the children they lose they would get back many children in return. The exception is that for the wife that they lose, they would not get many wives in return. **But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. (Mark 10:30)**

Getting many wives is not part of the reward for serving the true and living God. Only false religions teach such falsehood. So we see God's will on this matter for a man to have one wife but we know fallen men will rebel and practise otherwise. God will not be indebted to His servants and God will surely repay them for their service and sacrifice. No servants of Christ become poorer by giving to the Lord and serving Him. All that we have belong to the Lord anyway.

What if the Lord come and stretch out those nail pierced hands and demand that we give Him all our wealth to prove our allegiance, would we hand over all that we own gladly and willingly? What if the Lord turned His torn crowned brow to speak to us to leave a love one in order to serve Him, would we obey? The rich man could not give up his wealth because that was his love. His heart was in his treasure and he would not leave them. The Lord was testing this son of Abraham to test his allegiance and he failed miserably.

He wanted to know how he might have eternal life but he failed this test to obtain this life that he wanted so much. He had a misconception of what was eternal life. He had mistaken self-preservation and wealth preservation to be eternal life. He might wish to embark on another phase of his life where all his wealth was preserved and his life eternal on earth in this sin cursed world. He was a keeper of the Law of Moses. But concerning faith, he was found wanting.

Keeping the Law of its own has no merits. Faith without work is dead but work without faith is equally abominable. For work without faith gives a sinner a false sense of spirituality and security. The Jews were given laws to keep so that God would prosper them and protect them in order for them to live in their own homeland. They were promised a kingdom and a home in Israel. Their preoccupation was earthly and their love was Jerusalem and their chief joy a temple there to worship Jehovah God. All those years the Lord raised up prophets to teach them how to conduct themselves in their service of Jehovah God on earth. Not one prophet told them about things in heaven because none came from heaven. All the prophets were from Adam and so they were earthly in outlook. But the Son of God is from heaven. Obviously, Christ told the people about heaven and about things only He alone qualified to tell.

Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. (Mark 10:21) The Lord told the rich man he was lacking in one thing which was treasure in heaven. Unfortunately heaven was too far away. This rich man could not see beyond the sun what glory would be his if he had followed the Lord. He was preoccupied with things in this world and he prospered materially on earth. He could not bear to give up his earthly wealth to exchange for treasure in heaven. Heaven was simply too far from the present sun which he could not see with his eyes of flesh.

What he could see and touch was his material wealth on earth. The investment required of him was too high a stake to risk to secure eternal life. What if there was no eternal life? He would have squandered away all his wealth. He would have lost his chance of living in self-indulgence to eat, drink and be merry before he dies. Perhaps, he regarded Christ as a crook for telling him to give away all his wealth. But the wealth he was to give up was not for the benefits of the Lord and His disciples. He was to give away his wealth to the poor. Anyway, such investment for eternal life is just too great a risk as far as human understanding is concerned. The Price-Earnings ratio could not be measured with regards to treasure from heaven. The value is undefined and so human logic dictates that such an investment instrument must be rejected. The investment horizon was simply too long and too far and he had no such risk tolerance. His risk profile was simply to extend his life on earth to enjoy the labours of his hands. Heaven can wait while he indulged in comfort and luxury in this life.

He forgot his question was for eternal life for which he came to the Lord to inquire. Does eternal life require earthly wealth to sustain? Does eternal life have any lack? Is eternal life dependent on one's possession? Was he fearful of having eternal life living in perpetual poverty like those fishermen with the Lord? So what is your understanding of eternal life you believe you have already received in Christ? What is the value of money and property and possession to you? Would there be anything between you and the Lord that would mar your joy in this salvation which you claim to have obtained all these years?

If one tries asking sinners to receive Christ, he might get such typical responses. Would you receive Christ as your Saviour? My father would disown me... Would you receive Christ as your Saviour? My mother would hate me... Would you receive Christ as your Saviour? My children would turn against me and put me in the aged home... Would you receive Christ as your Saviour? My brother would reject me... Would you receive Christ as your Saviour? My friends would leave me... Would you receive Christ as your Saviour? My wife would divorce me... Would you receive Christ as your Saviour? My business associates would dump me...

If there is anything that comes between the sinner and the Saviour, he is not ready to be saved and cannot be saved. Wealth is just one such hindrance albeit a major hindrance. Honouring things between the sinner and the Saviour is just another form of idolatry. It could be a parent that is hindering a sinner to be saved. It could be a brother or a sister that hinders a person to be saved. It could be a wife or children that stand between the sinner and Christ and the sinner chooses his loved ones instead of Christ. It could be friends or business associates that hinder a person to be saved. They fear ridiculed or loss of business and goodwill more than they fear not inheriting eternal life. This shows their real faith and the value they attached to eternal life. Eternal life seems unreal and the Lord Jesus Christ could just be a fictitious character. Earthly wealth and kinship as well as friendship are more real and useful in this life. Such shortsightedness concerning spiritual things and things that are eternal is the common plague that hinders sinners from coming to Christ and to follow Him. Earthly wealth is the chief culprit though for the love of money is the root of all evil.

The Lord did not tell this Law abiding rich man to pay for eternal life by selling his wealth. The Lord told this rich man to follow Him. He told him to give them up for the kingdom was coming. The Lord Jesus Christ is the very essence of the kingdom of God. He was bringing in the kingdom of God to Israel which did not depend on the weak and beggarly elements in this sin cursed world.

Unfortunately this rich man's eyes were only focused on earthly things. He failed to see the change that would soon take place. Unlike Christ's disciples who were already fighting for preeminence among themselves concerning the coming kingdom, this rich man expressed very little interest on the kingdom of God. He was rich and he just wanted to preserve his wealth as well as to lengthen his life on earth. He cared little about the kingdom. He was preoccupied with his wealth and self-absorbed in his good fortune. What is so good having eternal life on this earth living in the presence of sin and whose heart is still covetous having to depend on earthly possessions? What is so good having eternal life and yet having to protect your earthly wealth from sinners who might rob you and steal from you?

Those who truly understand eternal life would not have to worry about what to eat or what to wear or where to live. The Lord knows that we have all these needs. All these earthly material needs are necessary during our few short years on earth. Eternal life means living in the presence of the thrice holy God and all the things in this world belongs to us. The kingdom is ours and we are indeed very rich beyond measure. We need not protect our possession in eternal life in the world in which we live. We simply have too much and our cup overflows. What is there to keep just for ourselves in the world of abundance in the kingdom of God? We do not need to accumulate more and more to sustain eternal life because we already own everything that belongs to Christ. We have been made joint-heir with Christ and what is there to worry? God spared not His only Begotten Son but gave Him up to die for us sinners and what more will God not give us?

But when the Lord comes calling for our earthly possession, would it become an issue? I certainly hope not. The Lord may want to use the wealth we possess temporarily on earth to serve Him and to spend for His kingdom. Would it be hard to give them up? The Lord will not owe any servant for serving Him faithfully. What the Lord promised about receiving an hundred folds in this life is literally true. I have experienced this promise many times.

All the worldly friends that I have lost because I have been saved, the Lord have replaced them with so many more brethren and sisters the world over. I find myself adopted into such a big and wonderful family of God and I cannot even begin to tell how big and wealthy this family is. The brethren and sisters that I now have are like the stars in heaven and I could not even possibly count how many there are in this wondrous family of God's goodness, mercy, grace and love. Even parents who rejected me because of my faith in Christ, the Lord has given me spiritual parents to guide me and care for me all these years. I have been received into homes by so many brethren over the years, who clothed and fed me and I have lost count. I would never be able to repay them for their kindness they showed to me in Christ.

Can you imagine opening up your homes to strangers who are not brethren of the flesh? But I have seen and experienced the generosity and hospitality of Christians willingly opening their homes for another Christian brethren in Christ. To be a Christian is to enter into a fraternity of saints, which is a very special thing. This exclusive membership comes through Christ and not through our wealth. The Scriptures have this promise: **For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. (Hebrews 6:10)** Godly Christians will look out for their brethren and take care of them in any way possible because we are all born of the same Spirit and washed by the same precious blood of the Lamb of God. The promise of Christ to follow Him has extremely great rewards that the fleshly mind cannot possibly comprehend. Leaving a few members of earthly family can get one into such a rich family of joint-heirs with Christ. This is simply mind-boggling. The rewards promised no doubt are more than a hundred folds in this life and beyond.

Eternal life in Christ far transcends our earthly possession. If we are true possessors of eternal life, our outlook for the things in this world will turn strangely dim in the light of Christ's glory and grace. We would not become like this rich man who went away grieved and failed the test of our true allegiance. For it cannot be that we become grieved when we are with our Lord and following Him. Those who find themselves grieved in the presence of Christ certainly would not enjoy the kingdom Christ is bringing into this world. The disciples in the past had forsaken all to follow the Lord and to serve Him. The Lord promised to reward them in this life and in the life to come.

Do you have the faith to believe the Lord's promise? Are the weak and beggarly elements in this world more important to you? The Lord may not ask you for all your possessions. But if He asked, would you gladly give them up for Him? Would your wealth stand between you and the Lord, the Lover of your soul, and mar your joy of salvation where you are already destined to inherit eternal life?

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. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Do you want treasures in heaven or are you just content with treasures on earth? Treasures on earth are very uncertain. Treasures on earth are very insecure. They come and go and they are subject to decay, pilferage, theft and fraud from sinners in this world. They are temporal and are here just to serve a purpose for a while. They cannot keep a sinner happy forever. They cannot earn a sinner eternal life. They cannot solve the problem of sin and death. They cannot reverse the curse pronounced upon the earth since the fall of man. They are broken cisterns if sinners put their faith in them to achieve happiness, prosperity and long life.

In contrast, treasures in heaven are what earthly treasures can never compare. They are out of reach from the hands of sinful men and they are never in thoughts of sinners to begin with. No sinners ever contemplate of stealing treasures in heaven because they simply do not believe their existence. It is simply beyond them even to think of such a possibility of treasures in heaven where their interest could be aroused to set their mind to scheme about how to steal them from Almighty God. Treasures in heaven are things that are eternal befitting those who possess eternal life. Earthly wealth is not compatible for joint-heir with Christ. Bringing earthly wealth into the kingdom of light is an insult of the highest order because the splendour of heaven and the glory of the kingdom of God where true treasures are will immediately eclipse the most glorious treasures found on earth.

The Saviour counsels His saints to seek to lay treasures in heaven beyond the reach from the hands of sinful men. This is the only way to preserve one's true wealth where they are not subject to decay or loss in any form or shape. Only those with spiritual eyes to see can appreciate this advice from the Lord of glory and set their course in this world to accumulate true treasures in heaven. This is where the heart of the saints ought to be living their lives on earth.

The apostle also wrote to: **In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Colossians 2:3)** True treasures are hidden in the

Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. All those who truly wish to obtain true treasure must go to Him. It is pointless holding onto earthly treasures which would one day be burned up when God judge the world. The everlasting treasures are with our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, the apostle Paul's advice is to: **Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (Colossians 3:2)** Only saints can set their affection on things above. Only saints who have been quickened have the desire to set their affections on things above. Sinners do not believe there are treasures in heaven. As such, they can only set their affection on things in this world like the rich man who went away grieved.

The very heart of the matter is where we set our affection. To be with Christ is where all our treasures are and they are up in heaven and not down here in this sin cursed world. Saints who take up the cross and follow the Lord will never be grieved. Only the lost who have not been quickened by the Spirit of God will not appreciate our Lord and the treasures the Lord has prepared for those who love Him. As such, they will hold on dearly to their earthly treasures. Their insecurity is understandable for they do not believe there are treasures in heaven awaiting them should they go to Christ and long to be with Him.

So is Christ your true treasure or the things in this world? Where is your heart this day? This is the very heart of the matter concerning things that are eternal. Only you can answer this question. I trust that you will choose Christ in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. May the Lord bless you as you live for Him and wait for His soon coming where eternal life is perfectly realized with abundant treasures in heaven!

If you have been blessed with the reading of this book and you wish to contact the author, you may write to him at charles@kiv-asia.com.