

Thank you, ...Alexis Brown
Speaker for today

What's Important?

"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you". Matthew 6:33

"And He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment." Matthew 22:37-38

September Birthdays

6 Melinda McCollum 11 Marie Burruss 15 Marcos Perales
16 Jim Burruss 30 Dortha Gentry 30 Kurt Hoffman

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

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Getting Ready...

We're just a few weeks away from our gospel meeting. Is it important? Is it a priority? The bulletin articles for the next several weeks will hopefully be beneficial in preparing for our meeting.

Let's get ready!

What We Treasure is a Serious Matter

By Joe Chesser
(Modified slightly for our benefit)

Jesus was never flippant when he spoke about what we treasure. Never! What we choose to treasure was (and is) always a matter of utmost importance. For example, Jesus said, *"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered it up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field"* (Matthew 13.44). Is Jesus saying that if we consider the kingdom of heaven our treasure, then we will with joy give up everything we have to in order to possess it? If so, I must ask myself if God's kingdom is worth that much to me? Or do I treasure some other things that I am unwilling to give up? Things such as my time, my money, or other things I enjoy doing?

How we answer these questions is a serious matter. It's a matter of eternal significance. It's a matter that determines whether we follow Jesus ... or not! In Matthew 19 there is a story of a young man who asked Jesus about eternal life. He was a good man, a religious man. He knew and had kept the commandments since his youth. But Jesus knew this young man's heart. Jesus told him to sell all that he had and give it to the poor, and then follow him. If

he would do that, he would have treasure in heaven. It was decision time. Did he treasure his extreme worldly wealth or did he treasure the kingdom of heaven? Although it made him sorrowful, he still chose to keep his worldly wealth and leave Jesus behind. He had kept all the laws, but in his heart, he treasured his money more than the treasure Jesus promised.

It's not just what we do that matters. It's what's in our hearts, for our hearts determine what we treasure. As Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, *"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"* (Matthew 6.21). He also said, *"The good person out of his good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks"* (Luke 6.45).

These things are not new to us. We've read them and heard them over and over. But being familiar with them doesn't make them less important. What we treasure is a serious matter. It is of utmost importance. We should never tire of examining and re-examining our hearts (2 Corinthians 13.5), because today we are being challenged more than ever to abandon what we once treasured to satisfy things of less importance. Attendance at worship services is often declining; congregations are closing their doors at an alarming rate; feelings seem to be replacing truth; evangelism is directed more and more towards what attracts people (services and programs) rather than lifting up the crucified Christ and teaching the gospel.

However, only we and the Lord knows what's in our heart. Only we and the Lord knows if we are willing to sell everything we have (Luke 14.33) in order to have treasure in heaven. Only we and the Lord knows to what extent we treasure His kingdom. My hope is that we all will seriously examine our own hearts to see if we truly treasure the kingdom of heaven enough to give it our all. My hope is that collectively the Lord's people will *"seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness"* (Matthew 6.33) and let everything else fall into place.

Words are Necessary

By Joe Slater

"Preach the gospel at all times. And if necessary, use words." Rightly or wrongly, the saying has been attributed to "Saint" Francis of Assisi and is often paraphrased, "Preach the gospel; use words if necessary."

Let me be the last to discourage anyone from setting a good example. I understand the gist of the lines from Edgar Guest's poem: "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day; I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way." Countless doors for the gospel have been slammed shut and permanently locked due to poor examples and outright hypocrisy of professing Christians.

That being said, our kindness, morality, pure speech, and honesty cannot inform anyone of their need for salvation, much less answer the question, "What must I do to be saved." Words are necessary! Nobody will know who Jesus is or what He did for us merely by seeing our example. Peter didn't say to Jesus, "You have the example of eternal life." He said, "You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

The quip, "Use words, if necessary," strongly suggests that words probably aren't necessary and may not even be desirable; it translates into a comfortable excuse to disobey the divine directive to speak the truth in love. "Use words of necessary" ignores God's own stated goal and wish: *"For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe"* (1 Corinthians 1:21).

Yes, there's a message to be preached, not just an example to be set. Nobody will know of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, much less how to respond to it, simply by seeing our example of clean living.

We open the door with our good example. Then let's go through that door with the words of the gospel!