

August 13

GIVING GENEROUSLY TO THE LORD

"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

MATTHEW 6:20

The believer is to be generous in his giving.

The early church was not interested in accumulating great wealth for itself. In Acts 2, for example, thousands of pilgrims gathered in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. When Peter preached the gospel on that day, 3,000 persons became believers, and soon afterward thousands more were added to the church. The pilgrims who became believers didn't want to return to their former homes since they were now part of the church. So the believers in Jerusalem had to absorb them. Since many of the inhabitants were undoubtedly poor, the early church had to give to meet their needs. As a result, believers "began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need" (Acts 2:45). The early church illustrates what it means to lay up treasure in Heaven.

Like the early church, we are to lay up for ourselves treasure in Heaven (Matt. 6:20). What is our treasure in Heaven? In a broad sense it is "an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4). We could say that, above all, our treasure in Heaven is Christ.

In a specific sense, Jesus is referring in Matthew 6:20 to money, luxury, and wealth. He is saying that to lay up treasure in Heaven is to be generous and ready to share the riches God has given to us, instead of hoarding and stockpiling them. By being generous, you expose yourself to the full potential of all that eternal life can mean. First Timothy 6:18-19 says you are "to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for [yourself] the treasure of a good foundation for the future." The more you send into Heaven, the greater the glory when you arrive. The greater the investment, the greater the reward. Make it your aim to invest for eternity, where you will never lose your reward.

Suggestions for Prayer: Ask the Lord to help you be generous toward others who are in need.

For Further Study. According to Galatians 6:10, to whom are we to do good?