

# LIFESAVERS

A Life Group of the Tusculum Church of Christ  
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*The 2007-2008 LifeSavers "Homebuilders" Study Series*

## "Treasures in Heaven"



**Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Luke 12:33-34 (NIV)**

Do you have a piggy bank at home? How often do you put money in it? I know some people who, at the end of each day, put all of the change from their pockets into a piggy bank. It may not be a lot of money, but when you add to it every day, it is amazing how quickly it builds up.

Whether we use a piggy bank or a savings account at the bank, it is a good idea to have a plan to save money for unexpected emergencies or when we want to do something special. One thing we have to be careful of is that the treasure that we are building doesn't become the most important thing in our life. Jesus warned about that in teaching his followers about money. He told them that they should not worry so much about building up treasures on earth, but that they should concentrate on building up treasures in heaven.

Treasures in heaven? How do we build up treasures in heaven? Jesus taught that one way to build up treasures in heaven is to give money to the poor. Can you think of some other ways that we might build up treasure in heaven? I think we build up treasure in heaven when we do things to help others. Things like:

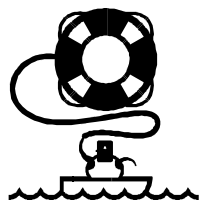
- **Visiting the sick**
- **Helping to feed the hungry**
- **Being cheerful and thoughtful to someone who is sad**
- **Praying for one another**
- **Working in a shelter for the homeless**
- **Being a friend to someone who is lonely**
- **Forgiving someone who has hurt you**
- **Saying you're sorry when you hurt someone**

All of these are things that we can do here on earth that will be stored up as the "treasures in heaven" about which Jesus spoke. They may not seem like much, but if we do something for someone each and every day, it is amazing how quickly they add up.

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***"If you want to feel rich, just count all the things you have that money can't buy."***





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## How Rich Are We?

One day a father and his rich family took his son on a trip to the country with the firm purpose to show him how poor people can be.

They spent a day and a night on the farm of a very poor family. When they got back from their trip, the father asked his son, "How was the trip?"

"Very good Dad!"

"Did you see how poor people can be?" the father asked.

"Yeah!"

"And what did you learn?"

The son answered, "I saw that we have a dog at home, and they have four. We have a pool that reaches to the middle of the garden; they have a creek that has no end. We have imported lamps in the garden; they have the stars.

Our patio reaches to the front yard; they have a whole horizon."

When the little boy was finished, his father was speechless.

His son added, "Thanks, Dad, for showing me how 'poor' we are!"

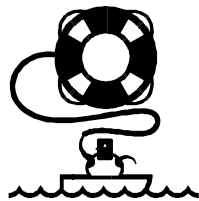
Isn't it true that it all depends on the way you look at things? If you have love, friends, family, health, good humor and a positive attitude towards life -- you've got everything!

You can't buy any of these things. You may have all the material possessions you can imagine, provisions for the future, etc.; but if you are poor of spirit, you have nothing!

<b>Psalm 127:1</b>	Proverbs 15:27	Proverbs 11:28	John 10:10	Luke 9:57-62
Proverbs 3:27-28	Mark 8:35-36	Proverbs 10:22	<b>Acts 2:44-45</b>	<b>Deuteronomy 8:18</b>
1 Timothy 6:5-11	Matthew 6:24-34	Proverbs 1:19	<b>Acts 4:32-35</b>	<b>Hebrews 13:5</b>
1 Timothy 6:17	Luke 16:2-4	Luke 12:15	Revelation 3:17-18	Proverbs 11:28
Acts 8:20				

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## Rich Man Poor Man

I'll never forget Easter 1946. I was 14, my little sister Ocy was 12, and my older sister Darlene 16. We lived at home with our mother, and the four of us knew what it was to do without many things. My dad had died five years before, leaving Mom with seven school kids to raise and no money.

By 1946 my older sisters were married and my brothers had left home. A month before Easter the pastor of our church announced that a special Easter offering would be taken to help a poor family. He asked everyone to save and give sacrificially.

When we got home, we talked about what we could do. We decided to buy 50 pounds of potatoes and live on them for a month. This would allow us to save \$20 of our grocery money for the offering. When we thought that if we kept our electric lights turned out as much as possible and didn't listen to the radio, we'd save money on that month's electric bill. Darlene got as many house and yard cleaning jobs as possible, and both of us babysat for everyone we could. For 15 cents we could buy enough cotton loops to make three pot holders to sell for \$1.

We made \$20 on pot holders. That month was one of the best of our lives.

Every day we counted the money to see how much we had saved. At night we'd sit in the dark and talk about how the poor family was going to enjoy having the money the church would give them. We had about 80 people in church, so figured that whatever amount of money we had to give, the offering would surely be 20 times that much. After all, every Sunday the pastor had reminded everyone to save for the sacrificial offering.

The day before Easter, Ocy and I walked to the grocery store and got the manager to give us three crisp \$20 bills and one \$10 bill for all our change.

We ran all the way home to show Mom and Darlene. We had never had so much money before.

That night we were so excited we could hardly sleep. We didn't care that we wouldn't have new clothes for Easter; we had \$70 for the sacrificial offering.

We could hardly wait to get to church! On Sunday morning, rain was pouring. We didn't own an umbrella, and the church was over a mile from our home, but it didn't seem to matter how wet we got. Darlene had cardboard in her shoes to fill the holes. The cardboard came apart, and her feet got wet.

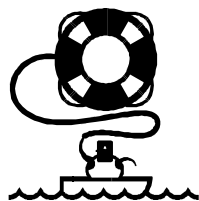
But we sat in church proudly. I heard some teenagers talking about the Smith girls having on their old dresses. I looked at them in their new clothes, and I felt rich.

When the sacrificial offering was taken, we were sitting on the second row from the front. Mom put in the \$10 bill, and each of us kids put in a \$20.

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As we walked home after church, we sang all the way. At lunch Mom had a surprise for us. She had bought a dozen eggs, and we had boiled Easter eggs with our fried potatoes! Late that afternoon the minister drove up in his car. Mom went to the door, talked with him for a moment, and then came back with an envelope in her hand. We asked what it was, but she didn't say a word. She opened the envelope and out fell a bunch of money. There were three crisp \$20 bills, one \$10 and seventeen \$1 bills.

Mom put the money back in the envelope. We didn't talk, just sat and stared at the floor. We had gone from feeling like millionaires to feeling like poor white trash. We kids had such a happy life that we felt sorry for anyone who didn't have our Mom and Dad for parents and a house full of brothers and sisters and other kids visiting constantly. We thought it was fun to share silverware and see whether we got the spoon or the fork that night.

We had two knives that we passed around to whoever needed them. I knew we didn't have a lot of things that other people had, but I'd never thought we were poor.

That Easter day I found out we were. The minister had brought us the money for the poor family, so we must be poor. I didn't like being poor. I looked at my dress and worn-out shoes and felt so ashamed--I didn't even want to go back to church. Everyone there probably already knew we were poor!

I thought about school. I was in the ninth grade and at the top of my class of over 100 students. I wondered if the kids at school knew that we were poor. I decided that I could quit school since I had finished the eighth grade. That was all the law required at that time. We sat in silence for a long time. Then it got dark, and we went to bed. All that week, we girls went to school and came home, and no one talked much. Finally on Saturday, Mom asked us what we wanted to do with the money. What did poor people do with money? We didn't know. We'd never known we were poor. We didn't want to go to church on Sunday, but Mom said we had to. Although it was a sunny day, we didn't talk on the way.

Mom started to sing, but no one joined in and she only sang one verse. At church we had a missionary speaker. He talked about how churches in Africa made buildings out of sun dried bricks, but they needed money to buy roofs. He said \$100 would put a roof on a church. The minister said, "Can't we all sacrifice to help these poor people?" We looked at each other and smiled for the first time in a week.

Mom reached into her purse and pulled out the envelope. She passed it to Darlene. Darlene gave it to me, and I handed it to Ocy. Ocy put it in the offering.

When the offering was counted, the minister announced that it was a little over \$100. The missionary was excited. He hadn't expected such a large offering from our small church. He said, "You must have some rich people in this church."

Suddenly it struck us! We had given \$87 of that "little over \$100."

We were the rich family in the church! Hadn't the missionary said so? From that day on I've never been poor again. I've always remembered how rich I am because I have Jesus!

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