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Brother Steward

Lay Reader Message

Eternal Treasures

An old epitaph reads, “What I gave, I have; what I spent, I had; what I kept, I lost.”

Obviously this person had much wisdom. He realized that, during his life, only that which was given to the Lord had any lasting value. The things he had purchased while alive were used up and gone, and the possessions he owned at death were of no good to him then.

Speaking to this subject, Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-21, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Jesus said that treasures on earth would not last. The cars we buy will become dented and end up in the junkyard. The clothes we wear will wear out. Jesus said that we are to store up treasures in heaven or as the epitaph reads, “What I gave, I have.” How do we store up treasures in heaven? When we give cheerfully and generously to God through our churches, we store up treasures in heaven. What are these treasures? Well, what is the only thing that goes to Heaven? Is it gold and silver? Maybe stocks and bonds? How about that car or mansion? No! The treasure is people! God is blessed and honored through our faithful giving because, through it, the Gospel is preached and taught and souls are saved.

In a quote from Joe Seaborn we read:

“In a real sense, giving to the cause of Christ is nothing more or less than laying aside eternal investments so that when we stand before Christ in heaven, we have gold, silver, and precious stones that we have been laying at his feet all along. The crown that we talk about laying at his feet will just be one more thing that we give, our final offering, in a long string of offerings that began long before.”

May God grant us the wisdom and then the strength to store up for ourselves treasures in heaven rather than treasures here on earth.

Brother Steward

Protect Us from All Anxiety

Our Abbot said, “Yes the world is in a mess and we worry about everything. But back in the Dark Ages things weren’t so hot either. The Crusades weren’t going so well, barbarians were bombarding our Monasteries, the King was extorting taxes, and the poor and homeless sought shelter. One Brother was so depressed with anxiety and worry; he never left his cot turning into a 24 hour couch-potato.



Another Brother, in charge of motivation, challenged him. “Look outward, not inward. Do something instead of nothing. Say a prayer. Plant some seeds. Make soup. Feed the hungry. Comfort the afflicted. Beg for coins.” And these things, the Anxious Brother did to his great relief. So our Abbot continued, “Today we face the same anxieties and worries, but we have the gifts of time, talent, and treasure, to overcome our fears. Stewardship of these gifts helps us to be active participants in God’s mission. So pray. Volunteer. Raise funds for our ministries. Yes, make soup. Sitting on the sidelines doesn’t help. Be an active steward. You will be a recipient of fulfillment, contentment, and spiritual achievement ... and God’s graces. Amen!”

Brotherly love ... and good cheer!



Brother Steward

Prayers and the GPS

A youngster asked me this question: "If my whole school says prayers at the same time, how can God listen to each one? How's that possible?" I gave the usual textbook answer that God is all knowing and listens to everyone. Not satisfied, the child persisted asking, "How is it possible for God to listen to maybe thousands or millions of prayers being said at the same time from around the world?"



"Well," I said, "Maybe this might try to explain it: remember the last time in your Dad's car and he was typing in instructions to the GPS for directions on vacation. What happened?" The child thought and then said, "A lady's voice came on and told dad to turn left, then right onto highway 95."

I said, "At the same time thousands, maybe millions, of travelers all over the country were asking for directions. And the same voice listened and answered each and every one at the same time. It seems impossible, but it happens every day."

"Wow! You mean God is like that voice?" I said, "Yes, God hears all our prayers; but answers them in different ways. Not in a voice you can hear and maybe not right away, but in a way you can feel or see or understand." "So GPS and G.O.D. have a lot in common," the child replied. I answered, "Yes! And as a young steward of God's gift of time, use it wisely."



God bless.

Brother Steward

Happy Birthday!

So the story goes: the Abbot called the Brothers together to celebrate Pentecost, which is said to be the Birthday of the Church. He asked each of them what gifts did they had brought.

The first Brother said his gift was prayer and that he would pray for loved ones, and the less fortunate. The second Brother said his gift was a talent to make things such as meals for the hungry. The third Brother said his gift was a small coin that he gave to the Monastery's building fund.

The Abbot was pleased and said let us sing in praise of the Holy Spirit. Now, there were Brothers each with his own language from Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England ... but when they began to sing, the Latin words of Veni. Sancte, Spiritus (Come, Holy Spirit, Come) came out from each, unifying the group in one joyous voice to the amazement of all.

"The Lord sure works in mysterious ways," the Abbot said and joined in the celebration.

God bless!

