

*Where Your Heart Is*

You are probably familiar with the phrase, “Dr. Livingstone, I presume” and you may even know who said it and on what occasion: It was said by Sir Henry Morton Stanley, who was a journalist, when he finally met David Livingstone in Africa, although the statement may be a fabrication. David Livingstone was in Africa as a medical missionary. Livingstone’s father was a devout Protestant who taught Sunday School and handed out tracts as he sold tea door to door. When David Livingstone was nineteen he and his father broke from the Church of Scotland and joined a community Christian group. The influence Livingstone received made him just as devoted to Christianity as his father, but with one difference: David Livingstone was very interested in science and sought to make a connection between science and Christianity. He was finally able to convince his father that science could advance Christianity and after becoming a member of the London Missionary Society, he had an opportunity to go to Africa. In addition to his missionary and medical interests, Livingstone is known as an explorer of the Nile River attempting to discover its source. While Livingstone had various motivations for being in Africa, he left his mark in some very positive ways in both civil and spiritual matters. Upon his death in 1873 his body was buried in Westminster Abbey but his heart was literally buried in Zambia, Africa under a Mvula tree, now marked by the Livingstone Memorial.

In Matthew 6:21 Jesus tells us, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” He says this in regard to not storing up material treasure because that kind of treasure will eventually be destroyed. I know that in some ways materialism is relative. Even the poorest in the United States have it far better than most people in the world. This does not mean we should be unconcerned for the poor in our community but that sometimes it can be hard to distinguish between material necessity and desire. Treasure, however, is not always about money or possessions. In the same setting, which is the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warns against doing things for show because when we get the pat on the back, that is the full extent of our reward. (Matthew 6:2&5)

This makes me question, “Where is my heart?” In other words, what do I consider truly important. Recreation is fun and it has great benefits. I would never discount the need for recreation but it does not have eternal qualities. Work is also important but at some point, most will retire. There is nothing wrong with retirement but again, it is not something eternal. When I am remembered years from now by those who knew me, what will they say? Will they remember someone who had some physical talent of some sort or will it be something of a higher calling? Actually, it does not matter. If my treasure is following and living according to the Lord’s will, then that is where my heart will be and my reward will be from the Father. As with David Livingstone, it should be evident to all where our hearts truly are.