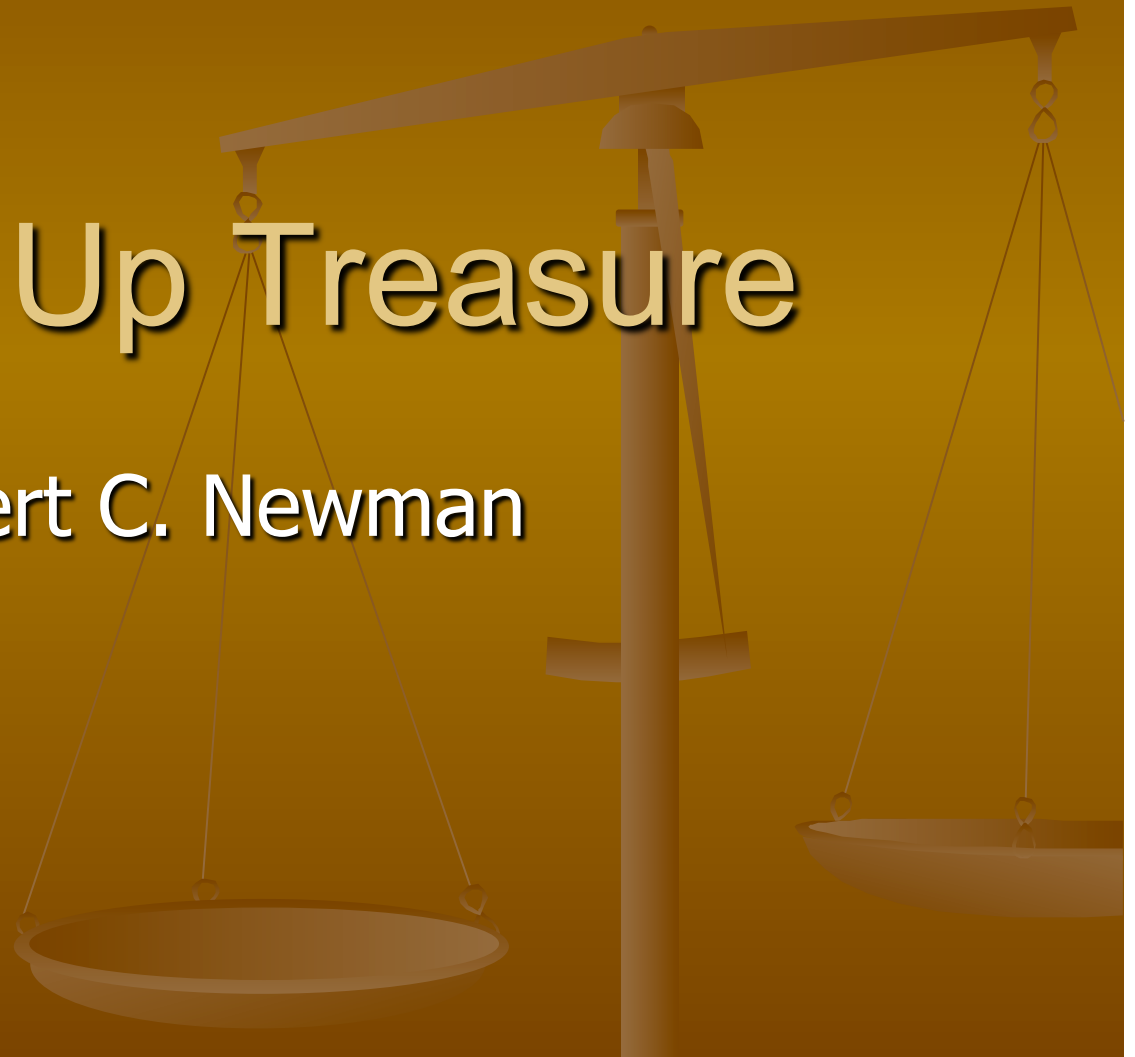


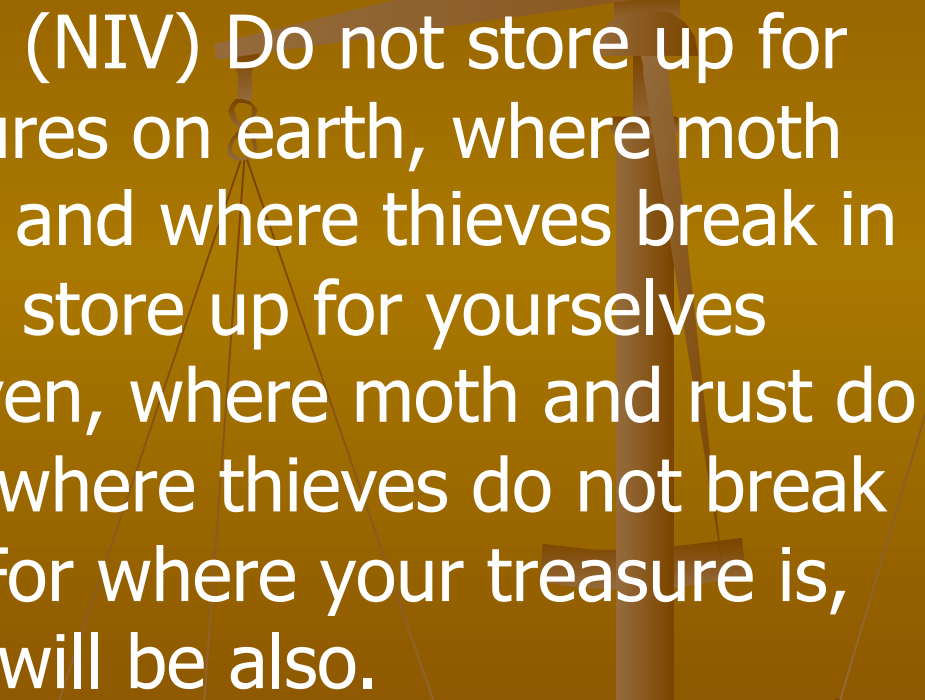
# Laying Up Treasure

Robert C. Newman



# Laying Up Treasure

Matthew 6:19-21 (NIV) Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.



# How Are We Doing?

- Jesus commands us to lay up treasure in heaven.
  - But while we're here on earth, we can't see our treasures in heaven.
  - So how can we tell how we are doing?
- It is easy for us to be mistaken.
  - We are likely to be influenced by the world's system of rewards.
  - But it won't be the world giving out the rewards!

# The World's System of Reward

- The world tends to reward ability.
  - Illustration of Picasso writing checks.
- The world tends to reward results.
  - You produce, you get paid.
  - Those with greater ability have a great advantage...
  - ... though Ecclesiastes 9:11 indicates that ability does not guarantee results.

# Ability Doesn't Guarantee Results

Ecclesiastes 9:11 (NIV)

I have seen something else under the sun:

The race is not to the swift

or the battle to the strong,

nor does food come to the wise

or wealth to the brilliant

or favor to the learned;

but time and chance happen to them all.

# The World's System of Reward

- The world tends to reward ability.
- The world tends to reward results.
- The world rewards the things that the world values.
  - For example, large salaries go to entertainment & sports celebrities.
  - Large salaries go to CEOs of large corporations.

# The World's System of Reward

- The world tends to reward ability.
- The world tends to reward results.
- The world rewards the things that the world values.
- Even when corrupted by favoritism, the rewards are still results-oriented.
  - If you are loyal to those in power, you will be rewarded.

# God's System of Reward

- God certainly cares about results...
  - ... but these are not under our control.
  - ... we must leave results in God's hands.
- God certainly cares about loyalty...
  - ... but this is a loyalty to who God truly is.
  - ... not a loyalty against truth
  - Remember God's rebuke to Job's friends.

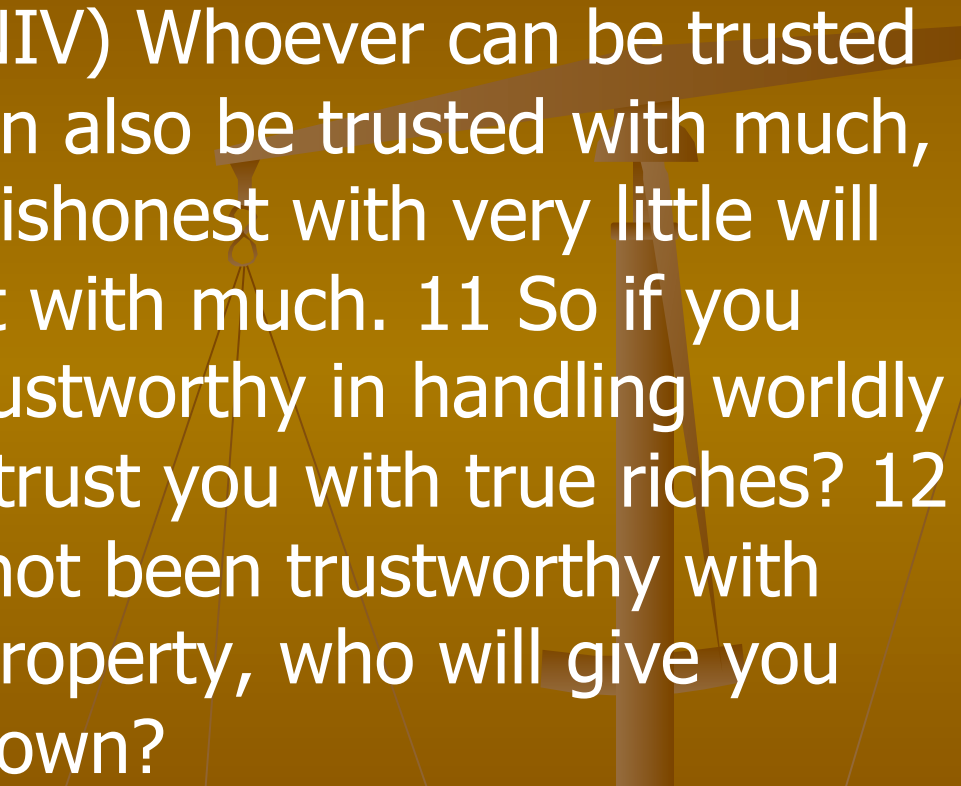


# God to Job's Friends

Job 42:7-9 (NIV) After the LORD had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. 8 So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite did what the LORD told them; and the LORD accepted Job's prayer.

# God's Way is Faithfulness-Oriented

Luke 16:10-12 (NIV) Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. 11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? 12 And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?



# Busyness is Not Everything

- We are not just to be busy...
- ... but without vigor, we are not faithful
  - 1Corinthians 15:58 (NIV) Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.
  - Ecclesiastes 9:10 (NIV) Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.
  - Eccl 11:6 (NIV) Sow your seed in the morning, and at evening let not your hands be idle, for you do not know which will succeed, whether this or that, or whether both will do equally well.

# God Rewards What He Cares About

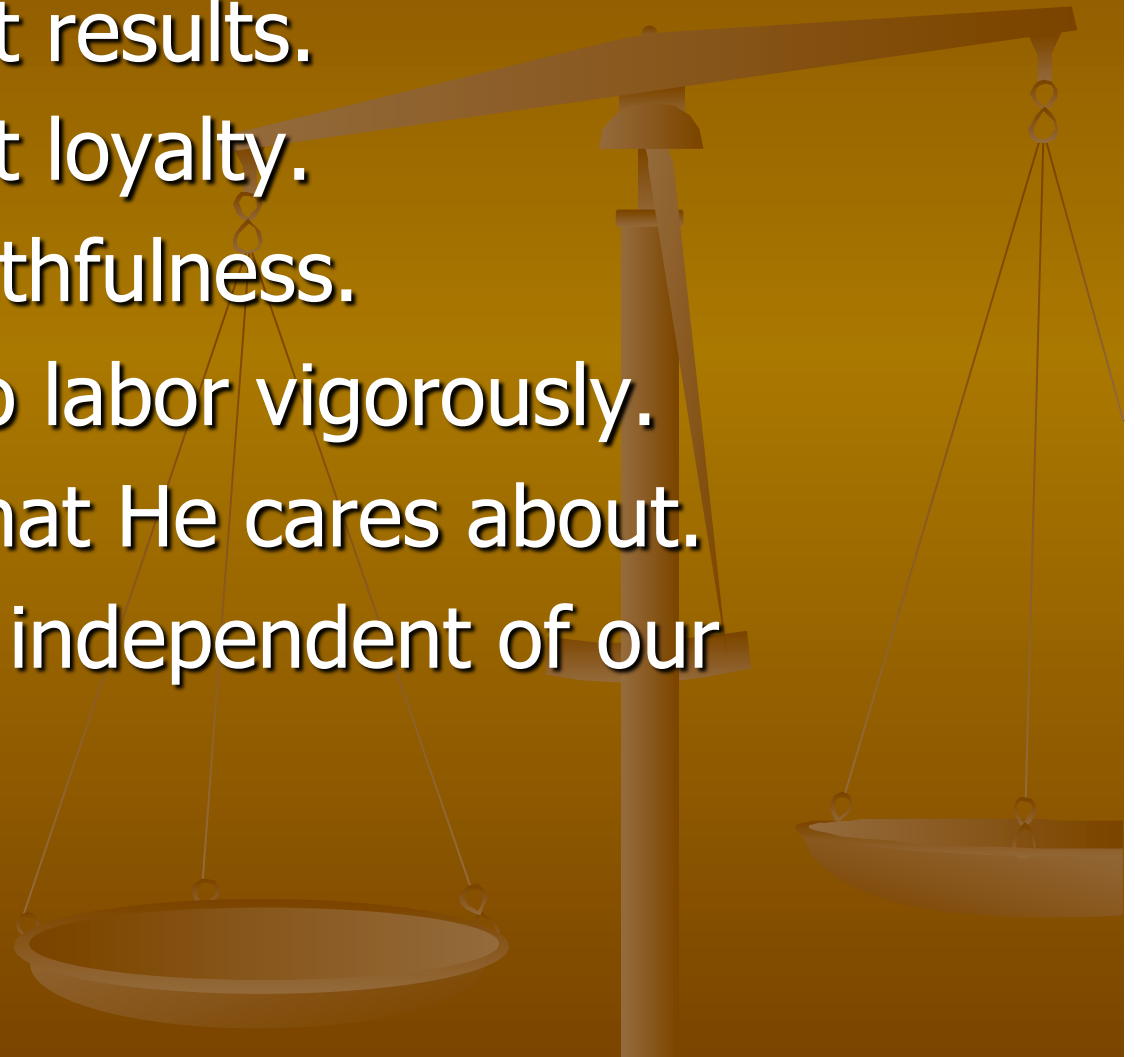
- Matthew 6:33 (NIV) But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- Matthew 25:37-40 (NIV) Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?" 40 The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

# God's Reward is Independent of Our Abilities

- Luke 21:1-4 (NIV) As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. 2 He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. 3 "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. 4 All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."
- See also Matthew 25:14-30, where the one with two talents was rewarded equally with the one with five talents.

# God's System of Reward

- God cares about results.
- God cares about loyalty.
- God rewards faithfulness.
- God wants us to labor vigorously.
- God rewards what He cares about.
- God's reward is independent of our abilities.



# Dangers of Miscalculation

Basically due to using the world's system of reward.

- If we have few gifts, we are tempted not to use them (but remember the fellow with only one talent).
- If we have many gifts, we are tempted to coast, but...
  - Pride goes before a fall (Proverbs 11:2, etc.)
  - The first will be last (Luke 18:9-14, etc.)



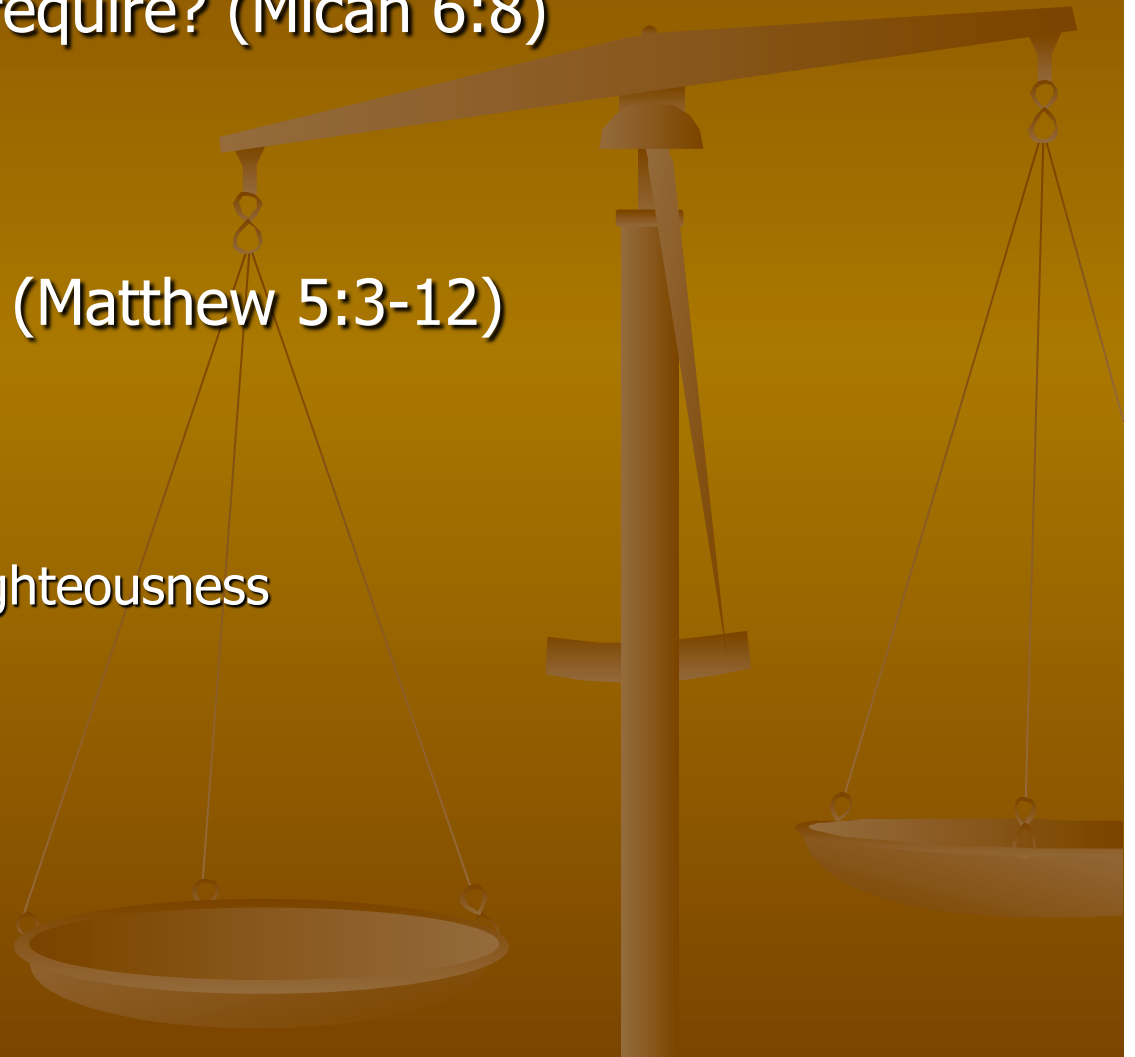
# Motivation is Central

- We should not be bargaining with God.
  - See Matthew 20, parable of the day laborers.
- We can do nothing without love.
  - 1Cor 13:1 (NIV) If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.
  - Effort, orthodoxy, etc., are no replacement.



# Conclusions

- What does the Lord require? (Micah 6:8)
  - To do justly
  - To love mercy
  - To walk humbly
- Who will be blessed? (Matthew 5:3-12)
  - Poor in spirit
  - Mourners
  - Gentle
  - Hunger & thirst for righteousness
  - Merciful
  - Pure in heart
  - Peacemakers
  - Persecuted



# The End

Let us be faithful, and let God  
take care of the reward.