

One Month to Live #2 – Eternal Perspectives

The **key question** of this series is: How would your life be different if you truly understood just how brief life really is.

And our **key Scripture** for this series is Psalm 39:4-5, "*LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered, and that my life is fleeing away. My life is no longer than the width of my hand. An entire lifetime is just a moment to you; human existence is but a breath.*" NLT

James, the brother of Jesus, asked the question "What is your life?" He said your life is a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. (James 4:13-17.) Because our life is so brief, I want to ask you an important question: **Where is your treasure?** Is it in the things of this world, or is it in heaven.

Matthew 6:19-21, "*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. Matthew 6:19-21*

Jesus said; don't put your money into the things that do not last. Don't put all of your effort and your energy and your focus into treasures on earth. Into things that just burn up in the end because they do not last forever. You can't take it with you.

One guy was so in love with his money that he put it all in a briefcase and his wife said, "What are you doing?" He said, "Honey, I'm putting my money in a briefcase, I'm putting my briefcase up in the attic and when I die and go to heaven, I'm going to grab the briefcase on the way up." Well sure enough, he did die. His wife went up in the attic and there was his money, right there where he had left it. She said, "I told him he should have put it in the basement."

Doesn't matter if you go this way or that way, you are not taking it with you and Jesus said don't let your treasure be in this world. He said, "*But instead, store up treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not destroy. Where thieves do not break in and steal.*" Vs 20

Verse 21 is the key. This is important. He said, "*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*" Wherever your treasure is, that's where your heart will drift toward.

Now, what is your treasure? The Greek word for treasure is the word thesauros (θησαυρος) and it means a deposit or it means wealth. Where are you putting your best, your energy, your wealth, your resources, your time?

Are you depositing your best into things that don't last and your treasure is on earth or are you depositing your best into eternal things, things that last forever. **Ask yourself honestly, where is your treasure.**

Think about last week, were you more focused on things that don't last or were you more focused on the things that last forever. Is your treasure on earth because if it is, that's where your heart will drift toward.

If you continue to buy things that you don't need with money that you don't have, wouldn't you agree that by your very actions you are **proving** that your treasure is on earth.

Jesus went on to say, don't worry about all the things of the world, about food and clothes. Your Heavenly Father knows that you need them and then He said this in verse 33, *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

We seek first what lasts forever. It's not wrong to have things, but it's wrong to seek things first. Instead, we seek God first and His righteousness and then He will add everything that we need.

How would your life be different, if you recognized just how brief it really is? I can guarantee you that your treasure would not be on earth if you recognized just how brief it really is.

(This person has ALS – Lou Gehrig's disease and may be hard to understand at first but listen carefully – you will never forget his message.)

[Video] "And then in February March of 2005 I was diagnosed with ALS and literally in August or that time you could say was one life and since I was diagnosed with ALS is a completely different life. My dreams before I got sick with ALS included being able to provide for my family, walking my daughters down the aisle, seeing my kids grow up, owning a fancy Mustang. You know, I had some material dreams and since January 07, I've lost the ability to feed myself, clothe myself, bathe myself. I really can't say this day I lost this or this day I lost because I kinda gradually lose it and then you can try to do it but then one day you just wake up and your body won't allow you to do that so I'm pretty much considered a quadriplegic now. I'm completely dependent on everybody for everything."

We are talking about Eternal Perspective today. And as you heard in the video – we need to burn this perspective on our heart so that we never forget the need to build our treasure in heaven not here on earth.

I see destruction and misery in the news and I am greatly impacted – so much so that Barb has actually turned off the news to keep me from crying. But then I slip back into normal life and normal thinking. And I see how easy it is for me to lose that eternal perspective and how quickly I can let go the things that really matter.

Life is just a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. To really understand what is important we are going to talk about **three promises** we should try to keep, to be able to seek first that which lasts forever.

1. I will guard against materialism. *"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."* Luke 12:15

Listen how **intense** Jesus is. *"Watch out,"* He says, *"be on your guard against all kinds of greed, because a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. Watch out. Don't slip into the materialistic trap."*

Watch out. Be ready. Be on your guard. Your life is not your things. Your life is not your car. Your life is not your clothing. Your life is not your house. Watch out. Be on guard.

Now, most of us would say, **"yeah, yeah, whatever,"** we understand that life is not about things but yet if you look at the way we live, our actions often say that **stuff is the only thing** that matters.

Basically, what is the **American dream**? Well, we want to have nice things, we'll start off with a starter home and then one day we will get a better home and then one day we'll get the dream home, with the right kind of kitchen and the Jacuzzi tub and with closets that are big enough to do laps around, you know eight laps around your closet equals a mile.

The **three car garage** for all of our cars and maybe a boat and we think one day when I have these things, then life will matter. Then we'll finally be happy, why do we think like that? **Because our treasure is on earth.**

As a guy I want to be a good provider for my family, and sometimes I forget that God is the best thing I can give to my family, not stuff. Much more important than houses and cars and vacations. And yet, I'll often neglect them to try to provide the things that don't last.

Jesus said be on your guard. In Luke 12 Jesus told a story about a **successful guy** – and in a way, in our world it would be like a modern day American dream. This fellow had a great business, a bumper crop.

He had so much he didn't know what to do with it all. So, he thought about it and said, ***"I know, I will build bigger barns, that's the answer, more room to store all my stuff. Why I have so much stuff I can kick back and take life easy."***

And God said to him, verses 20 & 21, *"You fool this very night you're life will be demanded from you, then who will get all that you prepared for yourself. This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."*

I promise you, if you only had thirty days to live all these things that you're pursuing wouldn't matter squat. It wouldn't matter a bit. Watch out. Be on your guard. Be ready. Be on your guard against all kinds of greed because our lives do not consist in the abundance of things.

You may have a lot of things; just **make sure that you're rich in the right place**. Make sure that you're rich toward the things that last forever because life is a mist. It's here for a little while and then vanishes. Do not allow your treasure to be on earth. Guard against materialism.

2. I will be generous. Because, our treasure is not on earth, we won't be holding on to everything, we'll see everything as God's and ask how He wants us to use it.

Be generous.

Be **generous** with your money. Be **generous** with your things. Be **generous** with your time. Be **generous** with your heart. Be **generous** with your words. Be **generous** with your attention. Be **generous** with your focus. Be **generous** with your entire lives.

Why? Because you cannot love without giving and our Savior said that Love is the most important thing.

What does love do? Love gives. John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son..."* What did He give? His only son. The very best that He could have ever given. When you love you give.

We give our **lives**, we give our **time**, we give our **money**. It's the only reasonable response to what Christ gave us. **If you have a problem with that you have a problem in your heart.** What is one of the greatest ways that we can give to God? By giving to people in need.

One day Jesus said there will be people who knew Me and there'll be those who didn't. And I will say to those who did, *"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink..."* Matthew 25:35

And the people will say, *“I don’t remember that. When were You hungry and I gave You something to eat? When were You thirsty and I gave You something to drink?”*

And He will say, *“... whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”* Matthew 25:40

How would your life be different if you recognized just how brief it was? Your heart would reflect the heart of God and **you would be generous**. When our treasure is not in this world but in heaven, we don't hold on tight to things that do not last, because our treasure is in heaven.

3. I will focus on what matters. Because the problem is we often don't. We make a big deal out of little things that don't matter. Why is that person in front of me driving so slow? He's slowing me down grrr, my world is coming to an end.

Grrr, that person cut me off, I'll show him I'll ride his bumper. Jerk, I'll lay on the horn. Grrr. A week from now you won't even remember this happened but now you are letting it wig you out.

What does matter? If we're going to focus on the things that do matter we need to know what does matter because truthfully, most of what I get riled up about is stuff that doesn't matter. Here's something you can do. When you are upset about something ask yourself **will this matter 100 years from now?**

If the answer is yes, this will matter 100 years from now, then what you're looking at matters. If what you're upset or bothered by will not really matter **10 minutes** from now let alone 100 years from now then it's not eternal. It does not matter.

What matters? People matter. People are always going to matter. Perhaps, the ones you are sitting next to right now, they matter, your kids matter, your parents matter, your dad that you may not get along with right now matters.

The people that live next door to you or that you work with or you went to high school with who don't know Christ, they matter. People who are in need, they matter. People matter. Jesus matters. His truth matters. Generosity matters. Showing people the love of Jesus matters.

Why is it though, that so many of us focus on the things that don't matter and ignore the very things that do? The apostle Paul, toward the end of his life, was in a prison chained to a guard and if you would have asked him, ***“You have one month to live, what do you want to say?”***

What Paul said in Philippians 3:7-8 might have been his advice to us. He said, looking back over his life, *“But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ...”*

Everything I thought was important was not important. Knowing Christ, that was the most important.

[Video] From the next 30 days I really want my spiritual life to be one that people can look upon and say there is somebody who believed God, believed that he knew God was doing what was best for him. There is somebody whose family knows their loved because not only because I loved them but because God loves them because I have shown them how to love and how to love God and I hope that people can see that when they meet me. Since I was diagnosed, I had a lot of regrets. I wish that, I regret that there are times where I've felt like oh I know I could have been a better husband instead, I was a very selfish person. I regret of being, you know, always thinking of myself first instead of my wife and my kids sometimes. When I came to work, there is no job, if I were to get healthy today, there is no job, no amount of money that would keep me from my family like I used to stay away. There is no sporting event that would keep me away from my family. That's probably my biggest regret. At whatever campus you're at, don't look at life as a series of hardships over finances, look at life as how can I take one step today to live closer to God than I was yesterday. You know Maureen, I don't think there is anything that I haven't already told you. I love you. I know you love me. And my biggest regret is that this illness has caused a lot of emotional pain for you but I do know that we have grown as a couple and that I love you and that I hope one day even after I'm gone that you can find somebody who loves you as much as I do now and yes, you can use this.

It's embarrassing how focused I can be on the things that don't last and don't really matter and right in front of me are the things that do and I so often ignore them.

“The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.” 1 John 2:17