

# Announcements

## **Sick**

Jo Byrnes \* Betty Cannon \* Sleatha Gore \* Essielene Henderson  
Faye Kilpatrick \* Sease Derrick (Bonnie Lord's father in  
Cullman, Alabama)

## **Singing Night this Wednesday @ 7:00 PM**

### **Area Meetings: Buddy Payne**

- Brother Payne will be with the *Glen Springs Road congregation* this weekend. Monday night he will be speaking at the UF Hilton Conference Center from 6:30 – 8:30 PM. The question he will be pursuing is *Origins: Who Needs Faith?!*
- Brother Payne will also be with the *Trenton congregation* the weekend of November 6–8. Friday night at 7:30; Saturday at 10:00 AM and 7:30 PM. The emphasis of the weekend meeting is *Studies on Evangelism*.

### **Young People's Meeting**

Tonight after evening services at the home of Kevin & Brittany Heaton in Trenton.

### **Ladies Meeting**

Tonight after evening services at the home of Ida Mae Watson.

*Remember that this  
next Sunday morn-  
ing we gain an hour as  
Daylight Savings ends.*



## Chiefland Church of Christ

Meeting at 211 NE 2nd Street in *beautiful* Chiefland, Florida  
PO Box 2539 \* Chiefland, FL 32644 \* (352) 493-1242

# Things Above

“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.”

—[ Colossians 3:1-2 ]—

October 25, 2009  Vol. 5, No. 32

## *The Committed Heart*

*by Paul Earnhart*

**W**ith Matthew 6:19–24, Jesus outlines His theme of the Christian's absolute love of God, but from a new direction. The first and fundamental threat to that love arises from self — the pride and arrogance which corrupt all our attempts at piety (6:1–18). Following closely upon the problem of ego is the challenge of “the world” — not the universe, or the people in it, but the “world” as a mindset, a system of values, a way of looking at life that treasures the present and the tangible above everything else (Luke 12:15).

This section of the SERMON ON THE MOUNT is a call to unreserved commitment in the choice between earth and heaven. Jesus begins by demonstrating why that commitment ought to be made to God and continues with two illustrations calculated to show the wretchedness and impossibility of trying to “ride the fence.”



**“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth.”** Jesus’ warning about the earthly treasures must not be trivialized into a prohibition of bank accounts or the mere possession of anything material. This admonition does not address the question of how much of this world’s goods the kingdom citizen ought to possess, but is concerned with his attitude toward them. The “treasures” of this text are understood to be whatever a man puts his whole heart into. They are not just things we value but things we value above all else. Our treasures and our persons become one.

Jesus’ observations about temporaries and uncertainties of such things as clothing, food and money constituted no news to His hearers. The world of our Lord’s Day was even more visibly fragile than our own. In their simple conditions, rot and mildew, insect and worm attacked their storehouses with a vengeance and their mud-brick walls offered no deterrent to thieves who could wipe out a lifetime overnight. Our modern refrigeration, closely guarded banks and casualty insurance often cause us to feel safely removed from the impermanence of the ancient world — but we should all know better. All “things” are subject to ultimate decay, the genius of man notwithstanding. It is impossible to secure material wealth against the ravages of time and circumstance. It is removed from us or we are separated from it (Ecclesiastes 5:13–15; Luke 12:20), and if we had it forever it would not bring us lasting satisfaction (Ecclesiastes 5:9–10; 6:7). Jesus means to protect us from the horror of seeing our whole lives go up in smoke (2 Peter 3:10).

It doesn’t take much intellect to see that to rest one’s very soul on such insubstantial vapor is an act of folly, but we must never underestimate the power of covetousness to turn common sense into quivering jelly. We are living in an age which values men by the wealth they collect. It is madness, of course, but this spirit can breathe itself into us before we know it and suddenly we find ourselves mindlessly grubbing for “things” like all the rest. Materialism is destroying many disciples, some even while they

are faithfully “going to church.” The charade continues but their heart is no longer in it. Prosperity has become the trial of those of us who live in what is perhaps the richest society in human history, and it is severe. Thomas Carlyle once observed that for every ten men who can stand adversity there is one that can stand prosperity.

**“But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.”** This is not an exhortation to find a way to transfer the things we treasure on earth to a heavenly bank. If so, there is no information given about how to accomplish it. I once heard of a man whose love for his house and land, together with his premillennial speculations, moved him to seek a means of guaranteeing the return to his property when the Lord came to establish His kingdom on the earth. The treasures of heaven are altogether of a different kind than those we might store up here.

Jesus’ message is a simple one — “Learn to cherish the things of heaven, the things that have to do with your Father. Only these will last.” His call is not simply to a better and more lasting treasure but to a total allegiance, an absolute commitment. To have one’s treasure in heaven simply means to submit oneself completely to that which is in heaven — God’s sovereign rule (“Thy Will be done”). This is the theme that follows in the succeeding verses (Matthew 6:22–24).

The key to understanding this whole section is found in Matthew 6:21 — **“Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.”** The Lord is far more concerned with what a man does with his heart than with what he does with his goods. Things are not our problem, God created them. An appreciation of things is not our problem. They have God-given purpose. The love of things is our problem (1 Timothy 6:9–10) — the disposition to let some moth-eaten old garbage take the place of the incorruptible God in our hearts is the problem.

