

Where's Your Treasure?

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[0:00] We have reached the end of our study on pleasing people, or people pleasing by Lou Priolo. It's nice to be at an end of a study like this, and now we face the hard matter of mortifying the flesh.

It's the end of our study, but it's the beginning of a lifelong fight against the sin. The last several weeks we have talked about humility and putting on humility.

Humility in action is the replacement to people pleasing. And there's just one last thing that we have to cover as far as the cure for people pleasing, and that's what we're going to talk about today.

We're going to talk about perspective. Perspective. We've all seen paintings from the medieval times or the ancient times, and they all look distorted and a little confused.

You can tell what the artist was trying to draw, an animal or a horse or a person or something, but it kind of looks like a five-year-old's drawing. The legs are sort of all hanging down, or you can see them all.

[1:09] The legs of the table are kind of off on a different angle. And the reason is that the artist hadn't developed perspective yet. The Renaissance came, and artists somehow discovered perspective.

I don't know how. They learned to set a point in the distance on the canvas and draw everything in relationship to that point, in reference to that point.

And when they did that, suddenly things started looking right. Animals started looking the way animals look. People and houses looked like people and houses.

Everything was more full, and there was depth. Everything was better. What God calls us to is a heavenly perspective.

A heavenly perspective. We need to look to a point in the future and then live in reference to that point at all times. We don't have to pick out the point.

[2:07] God has picked the point for us. He comes along beside us, and He says, Do you see that place? And we look, and what do we see? We see heaven.

We see Christ. We see joy and pleasures. We see perfection and holiness. And He says, Do you see that place?

Now, one day you're going to go there. So you need to live all of your life in reference to that one place. Think about that place all the time. And as you live, things will start to look the way they ought.

Your life will begin to be what it should be. So heaven is what we're going to talk about today. Not what heaven is like, but how heaven, the thought of heaven, should affect us today.

Okay. So from the beginning, let me ask you a question. It's a rhetorical question. I don't want an answer. But think to yourself, How much does heaven affect my thinking?

[3:13] How much does heaven affect my thinking? Or another way of saying it is this. How much of an internal perspective do I have?

Does the thought of heaven, my eternal home, change the way I live today? The opposite of heavenly mindedness is earthly mindedness.

One of the strongest and clearest symptoms of being earthly minded is people pleasing. It's people pleasing. People pleasers act the way they do because they don't see heaven.

All they see is earth and the things of this earth. Their perspective is no bigger than this world. And we've seen this over and over again in our study. The Pharisees did their good deeds before men because all they saw was men.

They didn't think about God or heaven. They never lifted their eyes to get a heavenly perspective. So the bottom line is this. The bottom line of the Sunday school lesson is this.

[4:15] If you want to dethrone the idol of people pleasing, then you must replace your earthly perspective with a heavenly perspective. A temporal value system of this world and of this time with heavenly mindedness.

So our first point is this. The Bible says that heaven should affect the way we live today. The Bible says heaven should affect the way we live today.

One time someone asked Charles Spurgeon, how do you defend the word of God? How do you defend the word of God? They mean, they meant, how do you defend against inerrancy and inaccuracies in the Bible?

And how do you know it's true? And all those things. And Spurgeon said, I don't defend a lion. I just let it out of its cage. And so today what we're going to do, what I'm going to do, is just let the word of God out of its cage and we're going to read a lot of scriptures about how heaven is supposed to affect us.

And so I just want you to listen and ask yourself, this is what the Bible says. This is what the Bible says heaven should be doing to me. And is this the way I think?

[5:29] Is this the way I think? So just listen as I read. Matthew 6, 19 through 21. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Philippians 3, 20. But our citizenship is in heaven and we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Colossians 3, 1. Since then you have been raised with Christ. Set your hearts on things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ and God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

1 John 3, 2. How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God. And that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

[6:59] Dear friends, now we are children of God and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him and we shall see him as he is.

Everyone who has this hope purifies himself just as he is pure. 1 Timothy 4, 7-8. Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales.

Rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

1 John 2, 28. And now, dear children, continue in him so that when he appears, we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

I could go on and on and on. Heaven is supposed to have an effect on the way we live, what we treasure in our hearts, how we purify ourselves, how we persevere in the Christian life, how we look at these failing bodies that are day by day dying and decaying.

[8:17] Everything. Everything is supposed to be seen in the light of heaven. And so, in the light of these passages, do you think about heaven as you ought?

Does heaven motivate you to please God rather than men? One author said this, The greatest weakness of the Western church, that's us, today is arguably our failure to think about the long tomorrow, to take seriously the reality that heaven is our home.

Out of this brings our love affair with this world and our failure to live now in light of eternity. So we love this world and we please people simply because we think so little of heaven and God's rewards for those who please him.

The remedy then for people pleasing is to think about heaven. That brings us to our second point. And in our second point, let's answer the question, how can I put on heavenly mindedness?

Or how can I start thinking about heaven like I should? We looked at those verses and it says that we should be thinking about heaven. So how do we start thinking that way? Turn with me in your Bibles to 1 Peter chapter 1.

[9:44] 1 Peter chapter 1. 1 Peter chapter 1 and verse 13. Therefore, prepare your minds for action.

Be self-controlled. Set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. 1 Peter chapter 1. 2 Peter chapter 1. Peter tells us how we're to throw off earthly mindedness and put on heavenly mindedness.

And there's three commands in this one verse. 2 Peter chapter 1. Prepare your minds for action. 3 Peter chapter 1. Prepare. Be self-controlled.

Or be sober-minded. And the third is set your hope. Prepare, be, and set. And all three commands have to do with our mind and how we think.

And so there's no room in the Christian life for a lazy mind. There's no room in the Christian life for a lazy mind. God wants us to love Him with all of our minds.

[10:45] And that's going to require training and hard work. And so if your mind is used to thinking about just whatever it wants, or if your mind is all flabby and so engorged on TV and the internet, then it's going to be hard to do the mental work that is needed to be heavenly minded.

The world wants to put all sorts of stuff in your mind. And most of it's no good. It's just fluff and nonsense. And Peter says, don't cave into the world.

Peter says, prepare your minds for action. That is, gird up the loins of your mind. The picture is being ready for warfare, for mental warfare.

And it's going to be hard to keep looking to heaven and keep looking to Jesus in this world. And so you must make your mind ready for it.

The picture is the soldier girding up his robe so that he can run and fight. And so that he doesn't have anything streaming behind him so that the enemy can grab him and throw him to the ground.

[11:47] Peter says, get ready, exercise your minds, get them in shape because Satan is on the prowl. He's going to do everything that he can to take your mind out of the fight.

So how long will a soldier last if he is daydreaming in battle? Or how long will you last if you begin daydreaming in this battle for your mind?

Peter says, be self-controlled or be sober-minded. Don't let your emotions run roughshod over your thinking.

Emotions are good things. But they're not made to rule what we think. They're made to serve and enhance our thinking. So the word of God is to rule our mind and everything and not our emotions. And too often we let our present feelings make God out to be a liar. We let our present feelings overrule the word of God.

[12:52] something bad happens to us and I feel horrible and I'm upset. I say to myself, I'm doomed. Nothing good can happen from this.

God doesn't care for me anymore. Obviously, He is not a caring God. And so we let our feelings overrule what God says and we make God out to be a liar.

Peter says, be sober-minded. Don't let that happen to you. Stay in control. Don't let your feelings rule what you know to be true.

And then the third command is set. Set your hope completely or fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. And brothers and sisters, we have drank deeply of the goodness of God and the grace of God.

We've talked about how day by day, hour by hour, we swim in the goodness of God. And we have innumerable spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus.

[13:56] We've been elected and justified and adopted. We've been given the Holy Spirit. We've been given each other the body of Christ. We've been given pastors and teachers.

But God is not done giving us grace yet. When Jesus Christ is revealed, God's grace is going to explode. We are going to have more grace than we've ever known.

We will gain heaven. We will have new bodies. We will see Him face to face and be made just like Him. And we're going to sit down at a party that is unimaginable.

And I'm a Calvinist and I can't wait for that party to happen. It's going to be the eternal honeymoon of the bride of Christ and her lover, the Lord Jesus.

And if you're married, you know that honeymoons are good things. And that honeymoon, the eternal honeymoon, is going to put all the other honeymoons to shame. And Peter says, now set your mind on that grace that is to be given you.

[15:08] set or fix your minds on heaven, on the outpouring of God's grace. And the tense of the word in Greek denotes that this is a one-time thing.

It's a one-time thing. Peter says, once and for all, finally, settle this in your mind. Heaven is coming and I'm going to be there.

One author says, set your hope perfectly, wholly, unchangeably, and without doubt or despondency upon your future glorification.

And that's how you endure hardship. That's how you make people small and God big. That's how you say no to peer pressure.

And heaven is the motivation to live for God rather than man. So the question that we're trying to answer is, how do we throw off earthly mindedness and put on heavenly mindedness?

[16:11] Peter says, prepare your minds for action. Be sober minded. Set your minds fully on heaven. Let that be the subtle disposition of your mind. Paul helps us too.

Turn with me to Colossians chapter 3. Colossians chapter 3. And we'll read the first four verses. Can someone read that for me?

Colossians 3, 1 through 4. If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Okay. Verse 1 says, Set your hearts on things above. In 1 Peter, we saw that the word set there meant a one-time thing.

[17:12] A one-time, once-for-all setting. And the word here for set, it could be translated keep setting. Set continuously your mind and your heart on things above.

We are to continuously set our hearts on things in heaven. And it's not good enough to take Peter's advice and not Paul's advice.

You not only have to have the settled disposition of, this is the continual way I'm going to look at life is looking at heaven. But, we have to be continually, day after day, turning our hearts and our minds to heaven.

And so, how much do you think about heaven? Is that your subtle disposition? And is that what your mind is always going back to?

We occupy, we are to constantly occupy ourselves with heavenly realities. With heavenly realities. Jesus said, seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.

[18:21] People pleasers are always after their kingdom and their righteousness. The things that they can do and the way that they can control things. What this person thinks about me.

How can I climb up the ladder to get a better job? How can I become more powerful? How can I make my children behave? Does this car make me look good?

Things like that. And that's how we once lived. But, Paul says, we can't live that way any longer. For you died. That way of life died.

And your life is now hidden with Christ and God. So where is Christ? He's seated at the right hand of God in heaven. And our hearts and our minds are to be continually going back for that.

And so as recovering people pleasers, as recovering people pleasers, we must learn to occupy ourselves with heavenly realities. And we can only do this one day at a time.

[19:23] Day after day. One moment at a time. So while I'm at work, I'm thinking, what does heaven mean for me here while I'm at work? How can I work in order to please God?

How can I think about heaven and the rewards that come to those who serve the Lord? And when I'm with a group of friends and someone has an off-color joke, I need to be thinking about heaven in order to avoid laughing.

Or I need to be thinking about heaven when I'm tempted to say something dirty in order to get a laugh. And when I'm at home, I need to set my affections and my heart on heaven.

So when I'm disciplining my children, when I'm living with my children, I'm not bending over backwards in order not to offend them, but serving the Lord.

Heavenly realities need to occupy our thoughts. And you can only do this by continually resetting your thoughts on heaven. So our first point is that the Bible says that heaven is to affect the way we live and we think about today.

[20:39] The second point was how we develop heavenly mindedness. We saw that you do that by continually setting your mind on heaven and setting it once and for all on heaven.

And the third and last point for today is in what situations is it good for me to think about heaven?

heaven? When am I to think about heaven? And if you're thinking to yourself, well, probably the answer is all the time, you're exactly right.

You're exactly right. The Bible says that heaven should be involved in every situation that we're in. Heaven should be involved in this situation here, when we're at church, when we're worshipping, when we're at home, when we're in trials, and when we're having good times.

Priolo gives 16 times that it is good to think about heaven. And those 16 times encompass everything about our life.

[21:44] And for the sake of time, we're just going to look at seven, and seven very briefly.

Number one, when is it good to think about heaven? Number one, the Bible says we should think of heaven when we are facing persecution, persecution.

When we're facing persecution, we know very little of persecution in our culture. But I think that as we stand for Christ in this world that is in our culture that is continually going away from God, that we are going to experience more and more persecution.

So let me ask you, and this is a question for you to respond, what temptation is there to be a people pleaser, during persecution? Is it a danger to be a people pleaser when persecution is happening? Dare. Okay, what do you mean? when you're going through persecution and you give the impression that you don't persevere and you don't do well in the middle of the middle of the middle of the strength?

Okay. So what you're saying is that it's going to... you want to try again? I think what you're starting to say is that when bad things are happening you're going to try to appear like, you know what, I can handle this, this is okay, I'm good with being a martyr, when in fact really probably you're not.

[23:26] I don't think very many people enjoy suffering and it's foolish to pretend that you do. How else, Mike? You look for deliverance from persecutors rather than them.

Okay. And how are you looking for deliverance? Try to earn it. Try to earn it by... By modifying my actions so that it will alleviate the things done by the persecutors.

Okay. There you go. So, let's just talk about in Roman times, Christians were persecuted and all you had to do was say, Caesar is Lord and you escaped.

And that's what they, all they were looking for is Caesar is Lord. You don't even have to mean it. You just have to say it. So, will you please the magistrate? Will you please the king?

And will you please Caesar? Just by saying those words and so deny the Lord. It's very tempting to modify your behavior. It's very tempting to come off of your profession.

[24:37] And we can see that in our everyday life when we're in the academic setting and it's foolish to think that Jesus is God. Well, when you have all these professors that are looking down on you and saying, that's just stupid.

And you keep your mouth shut to avoid persecution, to avoid ridicule. And that can be seen at work and in your family that you instead of being faithful to God, you rather sin and please people rather than God.

So the temptation to be a people pleaser is great when you're under persecution when you can escape it by just making them happy.

But the thought of heaven, the thought of heaven should help us to resist that temptation. Turn with me in your Bibles to Luke chapter 6. Luke chapter 6, verses 22 and 23.

Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject you your name as evil because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy because great is your reward in heaven.

[26:01] For that is how your fathers, how their fathers, treated the prophets. That's how the fathers treated the prophets. Blessed, happy, are those who are persecuted, who are excluded, who are insulted, and rejected because of the Son of Man.

Persecution doesn't always rise to the degree of murder. Sometimes it's just a scornful look and an insulting comment. all because of the Son of Man.

And we want to ask why? Why, Jesus? Why would I be happy when other people don't like me?

And I'm just like you. I want to be liked by people. I want to have friends and get along with people.

Why am I going to depart from my friends and instead be persecuted? because great is your reward in heaven. The thought of heaven is to be so overpowering that we actually leap for joy when we're persecuted.

And that's very different from what Dara was talking about, about, oh, I can be strong and handle it on my own. This is genuine joy and happiness in your persecution because you're piling up for yourself a prophet's reward.

[27:20] So, imagine it. There's Jeremiah. There's Isaiah. There are the prophets. There's Elijah. And there is common nobody Christian you who's no one.

And there you are. You're all in line to get the prophet's reward. And it's because you were persecuted. God is giving all of you a prophet's reward.

So you rejoice in that day when you're persecuted. You leap for joy because you're gaining a reward that is unfathomably great in heaven. And the thought of heaven does have the power to overcome the temptation to deny our Lord and to become a people pleaser.

And we can even have joy in the middle of persecution. Number two, the Bible says that it is good for us to think about heaven when we face all sorts of fiery trials.

trials. When we face all sorts of trials, it is good for us to think about heaven. Do any of you find yourself in a trial right now? A fiery trial?

[28:31] You feel like you're drowning financially. You're constantly in a tug of war with your children. And you feel like you're losing their hearts.

Every day you go to work and your boss makes your life miserable. And maybe it's none of those things. It's something inward. That inside in your soul you're suffering from spiritual apathy.

You're a desert spiritually. And it doesn't seem like it's going to end. What does heaven have to do with all those things? 1 Peter 1 verse 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ in his great mercy has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish spoil or fade kept in heaven for you who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you greatly rejoice though now for a little while you may have to suffer grief. grief and all kinds of trials these have come so that your faith of greater worth than gold which perishes even though refined by fire may be proved genuine and may result in praise glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

[30:04] Our faith is like gold. Matter of fact it's better than gold because when you put gold through the fire it's refined but one day all gold will perish. but our faith is like gold comes from the earth and it's all mixed up.

There's bad things mixed up with it. The only way to purify gold is to send it through the fire and the only way to purify our faith is to send us through the fire.

fire. And on the other side of the fire there's pure gold. And so God is out to make something beautiful out of our life out of our hearts and out of us and what we will be is only going to be fully realized when Christ is revealed.

Only then will we see why did I have to suffer so much? Why did I have so much grief? Only when heaven comes to earth will we see the results of the fiery trial that we're in right now.

And so we have to keep looking forward to what we will be afterwards in heaven. And if we do that we will have hope in this life to keep going through those trials that we suffer through every day.

[31:23] That our trials are purifying us so that we will be beautiful in heaven. Number three. We are to think about heaven when we face our own death and the death of a loved one.

The thought of heaven had such a grasp on Paul's mind that he said, for me to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me.

Yet what shall I choose? I do not know. I am torn between the two. I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far. So there's Paul.

He's a vigorous man. He's an active man. He loves reaping the harvest of his labors. He loves being out in the harvest field and gaining souls for Christ.

But at the same time, I want to go home. I want to turn the combine toward the barn. I want to lay the sickle down and go home. And may the same be said of us, that we're working.

[32:27] We're working hard. But you know what? At the same time, I wish my work was over. For us to die is to go to heaven, is to have great gain.

And so when we die, we'll just pull back the veil and we'll walk into our heavenly home and it'll be a wonderful thing. What are your kids waiting for this time of the year? If you have school age kids, what are they waiting for?

I'll tell you what they're waiting for because I remember. They're waiting for school to end and for the holidays to begin. They can't wait for Christmas. And death is the same way. It's the final exam on the final day before the holiday. And once you make it through death, it's time to go home and have fun with your family. So we are to think about heaven when facing our own death and when facing the death of a loved one.

1 Thessalonians 4.13 Brothers, and I'll add sisters, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep as to grieve like the rest of men who have no hope.

[33 : 37] We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. You are separated now. You are separated now, but you won't be one day.

Jesus will bring back your loved ones with him. If you're not already joined with them in death, then you will be reunited in his coming.

So you can put hope in that. All of your lost or your dead loved ones, they'll come back and they'll be robed in glory.

They'll be coming with the king and your hearts will break because you're so happy to see them again. And all the sadness and all the longing, all the missing them, it'll be over.

All the sad things will come untrue. And so when you think about heaven, you can hope in that and live. Number four, we are to think about heaven when facing earthly disappointments.

[34 : 42] disappointments. We live in a culture that is so wealthy, so fabulously wealthy. It's the richest nation that has ever been on the face of this earth.

And yet, we haven't escaped the conundrum, the confusing matter that was facing the author of Ecclesiastes. And his question is, what was really good and satisfying about this life?

What is really good and satisfying in this world? And the answer was very little. very little. If you can have a good marriage, if you can have a glass of wine, and you can enjoy a good hard day's work and a good meal, then you've gained what the reward that this earth has for us.

And none of those things satisfy us for very long. One day, we'll die, and our bodies will decay, and our bodies will grow weak, and frail along the way.

Sleep will go, sex will go, food won't taste any good anymore, we'll grow old, and we'll decay.

There's so few temporal rewards in this life.

[35 : 56] So is that you? Your body's decaying day by day. The outward man is decaying. Life does not have the enjoyments that it once did. Weakness is overcoming you.

So how do you lose heart, or how do you keep from losing heart in that situation? Paul gives us the answer. Therefore, we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

For momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory, far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.

But the things which are seen are temporal, for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Good marriage, food, enjoyable company, all those things are seen and they're temporal, but one day we will have eternal rewards and pleasures.

And so how do you not lose heart as you grow older, as you face life's disappointments, day after day of a hard job, and sleepless nights, you focus on the weight of glory that is coming.

[37 : 13] It's good for us to look to heaven when we face earthly disappointments. Number five, it's good to look to heaven when we are facing ministry opportunities. Ministry opportunities.

Teachers, pastors, deacons, this is especially for you, but it's for all Christians who have to serve in the body of Christ. We all are to minister to one another.

So when you do your ministry, when you're preaching, when you're teaching, you're to have an eye to heaven. You are to pastor, you are to teach, you are to pray, and to give, and to serve, and to counsel, and rule, and work.

Basically, you're to live this body, in this body of Christians, working hard, and you're to do it to win a prize. prize. And we look at the Olympic runner.

What is the Olympic runner running for? He's running for the gold medal. He's not running for silver. Silver is just number one loser. He's running for the gold.

[38 : 19] And we are to teach, and we are to preach, and we are to serve in the body of Christ. All of us are to serve in the body of Christ in order to win an imperishable prize.

1 Corinthians 9.24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.

Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we are imperishable. Therefore, I run in such a way.

I box in such a way as not beating the air, but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

A crown of glory, of imperishable glory, waits for all Christians, and we are to live and work in such a way as that we can win it, that on that day there will be no doubt that we deserve it, that we have earned it.

[39 : 25] So I can only briefly mention the last two. Number six. Number six. We're to think about heaven when facing spiritual apathy.

If you're struggling with spiritual apathy, think about heaven, and it will motivate you. Number seven. We're to think about heaven when facing self-exalting desires and circumstances.

Jesus says, beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be seen by them. Otherwise, you have no reward with your father who is in heaven.

When temptation comes to do our good works before men, we have to think about heaven. To do our good works before them is to lose our reward in heaven.

people to do I wasn't expecting that.

[40 : 32] I was expecting some more direct answer, some command or some tricks or something, I don't know. But when I started going through this material, I kept asking myself, what does heavenly mindedness and humility have to do with people pleasing?

I was looking for a band-aid and God went for the jugular. He went for the heart. He wanted to kill our sin and so he killed it at its root.

The cure for people pleasing is not some band-aid. It's not some, okay, stop doing that and start doing this. It was, you need a heart transformation. You have proud thoughts.

You need to have humble thoughts. You have earthly thoughts. You need to be thinking about heaven. And so only a deep-down heart change will fix the sin of people pleasing.

So may God help us to clothe ourselves in humility as we learned the last few weeks and at the same time put on the glasses that we can see heaven instead of earth.

[41 : 34] And we're dismissed.