Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

01 November 2026

Guideline for investing in Eternity.
Text: 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." *Matthew 6: 19-21*.
I spent many years asking who I thought were learned and religious men, pastors and teachers, how we lay up treasures in heaven and none of them could give me a straight answer.
Then I started reading scripture each day and in those readings I found the answer.
Feeding the poor.
Helping others.
Giving instead of taking or getting.
Jesus says that when you do such things you lay up treasures in heaven.
Self sacrificing loving.
That is the answer I was looking for, for many years.
It is the same concept as paying forward in a movie. God notices when we put others first and use our resources in behalf of them.
But we are also to be shrewd in the use of our wealth.
We, you and I, are headed to heaven after this life ends and we go home.
We go to in inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for each of us.
Most people have an instinct about a life after this one.
Our instinct tells us that heaven must exist because of the nature of human personality.
So much good here goes unrewarded.
So much truth here goes unheralded.
So much that is noble and beautiful here is never recognized.
Instinctively we believe that somewhere, somehow, right will be required. Like Job.
All of us have an intuition about heaven.
We long for it, and we have an occasional inkling of its delight in our consciousness.
Something happens, and suddenly we feel a joy that we wish could last forever.
A premonition of paradise surges in every one of us.
All of us have an incurable imagination about heaven.
The imagery of music in heaven comes primarily from biblical images.
Both classical anthems and gospel songs stretch our imagination to picture heaven as a celestial city, the sweet by and by, or the promised land.
One cannot read Paradise Lost or Paradise Regained and not be moved.
C. S. Lewis's imagination portrays a heaven of opportunity and endless possibility.
One cannot read The Great Divorce and not have the imagination stirred.
Yet with all our instinct, intuition, and imagination, we have little real information.
Science cannot tell us what is after death.
Philosophy cannot tell us what is after death.
Human genius in artistic expression can only describe a little of it.

Shakespeare said in one of Hamlet's soliloquies: but that dread of something after death, the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveler returns, puzzles the will, and makes us rather bear those ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of.
Left to ourselves we know so little about that undiscovered county.
But the Good News is that a traveler has returned.
Jesus Christ, the Son of God, took on human nature, lived as a man, and died as a man.
His body was put in a grave; his disembodied spirit went to God; then his spirit returned to inhabit a raised and glorified body.
By the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has given us hope.
We have something to anticipate after death.
And that which we can joyfully anticipate is continued existence, continued identity, individuality, personality, life everlasting.
Is there life after death?
Job's question, "Will a man live again after death?" is asked by every serious-minded person.
Jesus gives the answer *I John 11:25-26*: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, through he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in my shall never die."
No wonder Peter exclaimed, "Hallelujah!"
Whatever your trials, blessed be God who has given us birth to a life with hope.
What kind of life is it?
This life after death is so wonderful and so glorious that it is also called an inheritance.
"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance."
Verse 4 describes the afterlife of a believer as an inheritance, a possession prepared for an heir.
God has prepared a life after death that is of such bounty and blessedness that it is here called an inheritance.
All through Scripture we are reminded of how God prepares the very best for those who are his.
"Thou prepares a table before me in the presence of mine enemies,"
"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee."
Jesus often spoke of the kingdom of God as being like a banquet table.
In fact, he said on one occasion, "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son."
We find all throughout Scripture promises that God has prepared many blessings for those who love him.
In Jesus' parable of the sheep and the goats in *Matthew 15*, he says that when the Son of Man comes in his glory, "The King will say to those on his right, Come you who are blessed by my Father, take your in inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world."
He also says, "No eye has seen no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."
That which we anticipate is a life after death that is prepared for us by a loving heavenly father, and eternal Savior, and a divine Comforter.
It is prepared as an inheritance.
What are the attributes of this inheritance?
In *verse 4* Peter describes some of the characteristics of this life, this inheritance.
Life after death is incorruptible.
Most of us have stood by the bedside of the sick and dying, watching human suffering and pain.
We have all probably stood beside a grave of a young child who has tragically been killed. Or of a young man in the prime of his life, or of a mother who has left precious children, and we have felt

the pain and hurt of the family.
But the life God has prepared for us as our inheritance is deathless.
Revelation 21:4 says, “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for former things are passed away.”
Life after death is undefiled.
Life in the presence of Christ will be holy, pure, and sinless.
Do you get tired of this sinful world?
Some of you work every day in a world where you see backstabbing, greed, lust, hate, rivalry, and jealousy.
Do you ever get tired of the sin that is inside you?
Do you get sick of your impure motives, your impure thoughts and attitudes?
Our inheritance is a life free of sin, no Satan, no temptation, no wrong desires to tarnish or taint that life.
Life after death doesn’t fade.
This means that it is unimpaired by time.
Its beauty never fades or tarnishes.
When we’ve been there ten thousand years, bright shinning as the sun; we’ve no less days to sing God’s praise, than when we’d first begun.
Life after death is reserved in heaven for you.
The phrase “in heaven” suggests that there is a definite location where Jesus in his glorified humanity is even now, through in his deity and by his Spirit, he is everywhere.
The verb “reserved” means that our inheritance is kept save.
We who believe in Jesus Christ are not only protected and preserved by God’s power in this world, but our inheritance is secured for the next world.
Our in inheritance is awaiting us when we are ready for it.
It wouldn’t do much good to try to teach a five-year-old child algebra.
They are not ready for that.
But when their mind is ready and the time is right, then that which is prepared for them will be taught to them.
Likewise, in this world we are not ready for heaven.
Therefore our inheritance is being reserved for us.
Oh what a hope we have!
What an in inheritance, a life after death that is incorruptible, undefiled, unfading, and reserved in heaven.
Is this inheritance for you?
The only way you can receive it is by personal faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living Lord God Almighty!