

How do I lay up treasure in heaven? Follow Matt 6:19-21

There are really two questions that arise from these verses. The first question is "How do I lay up treasure in heaven?" And the second question is "Why should I care?" Well, Matt. 6 is a chapter devoted almost entirely to prayer. For instance, the "Lord's Prayer" is in this chapter. So, there must be something about laying up treasure in heaven that has something to do with prayer.

In fact, we find that you and I have a Prayer Bank Account in heaven (Rev. 5:8; Rev. 8:3-4), just like you have a financial bank account on earth. Your prayer bank is where prayers are deposited and where prayers are withdrawn. In other words, sometimes when you pray, you make deposits; and other times when you pray, you make withdrawals. But, just like at your local bank, if you want to make a withdrawal, you have to have something deposited in there from which to draw.

Now, the way to make prayer deposits is to pray for others (Lk 6:28). Because when you pray for others, you are "giving." And, according to the Bible, when you "give, it shall be given unto you," (Lk 6:38). That is a Biblical principle that we know works in the financial realm. We have just failed to apply it in the realm of prayer.

Oftentimes, Christians make the mistake of praying mostly for themselves, while neglecting to pray for others. This neglect leaves their prayer bank account balance in the "red." They are overdrawn most of the time, resulting in additional personal prayers being drawn against "insufficient funds." Furthermore, some Christians are guilty of depositing "counterfeit" prayers, like the Pharisee in Lk. 18:11-12.

Here are some excellent examples from the Bible on how to make prayer deposits in your prayer bank account:

1. Intercession - Here are examples of men who prayed for others, even if they weren't their friends, even if they were those who were hard to deal with:

- a. Gen. 20:7, 17 – Abraham prayed for Abimelech, a heathen king, and God healed him and his wife.
- b. Num. 11:2 – Moses prayed for the Jews in the wilderness and God quenched the fire.
- c. Num. 21:7 – Moses prayed for the Jews when they were getting bit by the fiery serpents.
- d. Deut 9:20, 26 – Moses prayed for his brother and for the Jews so that God would not destroy them.
- e. Job 42:7 – Job prayed for his "friends."
- f. Job 7:17-21 – Job prayed for himself and confessed everything he knew, but he still was not released from his captivity. He finally "got a hold of God" when he prayed for others in Job 42.
- g. John 17:9, 15, 20 – At the hour of Jesus' most intense agony, he prayed very little for himself; rather he prayed for "others."

2. Confession –

- a. In Dan. 9:4-20, Daniel confessed his iniquity and the transgressions of his people, and then God "gave" him the answer to cause him to understand the matter (Dan. 9:21-27).
- b. In Lev 26:40-44, God promised to "give" relief when iniquity is confessed.

3. Thanksgiving –

- a. Ps. 50:14-16, when you offer thanksgiving to God you are "given" deliverance.
- b. Phil 4:6-7, when you offer prayers of thanksgiving, God "gives" you peace of mind and peace of heart.

4. Prayer for yourself – This is a withdrawal. But remember that you have to have something on deposit before you can make the withdrawal.

- a. a. 2 Cor 12:7-9, Paul prayed for himself and the Lord supplied him with grace. Remember, when you pray for yourself, be satisfied with the answer.

You open your prayer bank account by praying. You accept the prayers that Jesus prayed for you (Heb 7:25). Then you confess the Lord Jesus (Rom 10:9-10). Then you thank Him for dying for you. And finally, you pray to receive Him as your Savior. So, open your account today and start making deposits. One day you may need to make a very large withdrawal!