

## Preserving the Treasure

*2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

*Matthew 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.*

### I. Review

1. This is the third and final message of a series where we have been talking about oil. On March 29, I preached, “Maintaining Our Lamps,” where we looked at the importance of a full vessel as we considered Jesus’ parable of 10 virgins.
2. The only way to make it through the dark night without suffering from burn out, or run out, is by keeping the wick trimmed—“coming clean” before God—and by being filled with the Spirit and keeping a fresh supply of oil on hand—keeping that prayed up experience as a priority.
3. On Wednesday night I preached on “The Pressing That Produces a Blessing,” where we looked at Zechariah’s vision of the two olive trees that continuously provided oil to keep the seven lampstands burning.  
*Zechariah 4:2-3*  
*2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:*  
*3 And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.*
4. The angel told Zechariah the olive trees were:  
*Zechariah 4:14 Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. [image of olive trees and candlesticks]*
5. We focused on the two olive trees that are called the “anointed ones,” or sons of the Anointed One, whose behind the scenes pressing was producing the blessing of a continual supply of oil so the vessel was always full.
6. So even in these times of the *corona virus pressing* that we are in, if we deliberately and intentionally and diligently lean on God during the pressing, this period will be a time of maturing and fruitfulness in our walk with God, not a time of decay.
7. And do you know the benefit of putting mature fruit, specifically olives, into a press? More oil for the candlesticks.
8. So the sum of these messages is this: keep directing the pressure of this pressing time into private times with Jesus in prayer warfare, fasting, getting deeply into the Word, getting filled with the Spirit, and continually being refilled with the Spirit.
9. That keeps the fire burning so it will never go out.
10. In the message today, I want to help you see the value of what is in your hands right now.
11. You have something to be treasured that is being produced in these days of pressing. It is something of great value that must be preserved and treasured.
12. I want to speak for a few minutes on, “Preserving the Treasure.”

## II. Danger of losing value

### A. The value of the treasure

1. Generally speaking, it is not hard to lose sight of the value of something you have in your hands because you think of it as permanent.
2. I mentioned this verse during one of our devotions this week:  
*Ps 49:11 Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names.*
3. Consider this material example. Suppose you have a car that is working right now. It may not be as nice as some others, but it is working. And because of that, it has an important value to you. It is transportation.
4. Have you thanked God for your car lately as something valuable to you?
5. Well all that must happen to make you regard that car as valuable, is when you start to hear a mysterious noise, or start to feel a troubling shaking.
6. You pull that car over to the side of the road as it dies, and suddenly you are impacted by the high value that car had. You are stuck.
7. Or for another example. You are healthy. You don't have excessive pains in your body and feel pretty good. Have you taken time to thank God for that good health?
8. Well when you wake up with a throbbing head, pains in the throat and chest, and high fever and coughing, you get the feeling of wanting to be well again.
9. When I've been sick, it often happens that I recall what it was like to feel well, and then remember the high value of that good health.
10. Those things were treasures with value and it is important to give them the proper care that high valued items deserve.

### B. The temple treasure

1. Let me take you to the Word of God and to Solomon's amazing construction project of the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. It was a very valuable place and needed protection to guard its treasures.  
*2 Chron 5:1 Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was finished: and Solomon brought in all the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.*
2. Not only had Solomon treasured these things, but so had his father David.
3. The temple to the Lord was very precious and valuable, and so was the massive amounts of gold in the temple treasury.
4. And as is true with anything of great value, it required tight security to keep it in place.
5. Their faith in God was strong, their king was strong, their nation was strong, and they saw it as important to protect their national treasures.
6. Soldiers and servants guarded that temple treasure.

### C. When the value declines

1. However, over the years, weaker kings came to power who did not serve the Lord and did not value the sacrifices of earlier generations to build up that treasure.

2. And during times of threats from advancing enemy armies, they used temple treasures to bargain with their enemies because they were too weak to fight against them.
3. Like in 2 Chronicles 12, where we read of Rehoboam, Solomon's son who relinquished much of the temple treasure when the armies of Egypt encamped against Jerusalem.  
*2 Chron 12:9 So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made.*
4. This was the first of many times treasures were taken from the temple.
5. King Asa took the silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the Lord to purchase an alliance with the king of Syria. (1 Kings 15:18)
6. King Jehoshaphat also took the gold from the treasures of the house of the Lord and surrendered it to the king of Syria. (2 Kings 12:18)
7. King Ahaz cut out some of the ornate brass from the temple and gave it to the king of Assyria. (2 Kings 16:17-18).
8. This list goes on and on, until Babylon came and took every last piece of treasures from the temple and destroyed it.
9. What had happened there, was that kings forgot the high value of their relationship with their God, they lost their vision of their heritage, they lost their separateness to God, and as a result, they also lost their strength.

### III. The church's treasure

#### A. Keeping our promises

1. So what lessons from history can we learn to benefit us today?
2. What treasures do we have that we need to protect as something of high value during this period of refocus?
3. It is time to give account of what we have been given:  
*Matt 18:23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.*
4. I will remind you of something you know—these days of confinement are perhaps only days or weeks from being ended.
5. And there are treasures that have been pressed out during this time that need to survive this temporary period.
6. Most of us have been talking about things we want to do when the stay at home orders are over and we have the freedom to get out and do things again.
7. Yes, being able to get out and hang out with family and friends will be a top priority.
8. Going shopping where you can paw over items and choose for yourself what you get.
9. But there has also been something coming out of the press of these days that must continue to be of high value to us—laboring the Lord in His fields.
10. I want to get back to church! And I've heard many others express the same feeling.
11. Listen friends, that is a high-value treasure to us that must be protected.
12. Sunday school teachers, do you miss your kids? Singers and musicians, do you miss ministering together?

13. Worshipers, do you miss singing and dancing with your brothers and sisters as you praise the Lord together?
  14. And even those who have been just so-so about church attendance or in participating in worship, I bet some of you told the Lord that as soon as the doors open to the church again, you will be right up front with those noisy ones giving your all to the Lord.
  15. These are valuable promises that changing circumstance cannot take away from us. *Deut 23:21 When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.*
  16. This is not jail-house religion where we make pledges to live for God if He will just get us out of this—no, these are valuable pledges that have been birthed in the pressing, about giving more of ourselves to God.
  17. We pressed out these valuable convictions during a trying time that we will live out when this trial is past.
- B. Where is the treasure?
1. First of all, remember what treasure is in you that you must preserve with high value: *2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*
  2. The power of God inside of you is an excellent, or extraordinary treasure that needs to be regarded with utmost care—preserve that treasure.
  3. Do you remember Solomon’s temple we just talked about? Because some kings diminished its value through backsliding, they lost their temple.
  4. But we are the church and we are the temple with a valuable treasure within: *1 Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*
  5. Do you have the Holy Ghost? Then you have a treasure in your temple!
  6. But allow me to clarify that. That temple and that treasure don’t actually belong to you. They belong to God so we need to take even better care of valuing them: *1 Corinthians 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*
  7. You are a treasure chest that belongs to God, and you have a treasure inside you that came from God, so we must give a high value to this arrangement.
  8. This is no time to play “Let’s Make a Deal” with the devil and trade the Holy Ghost experience for anything.
  9. And this is no time to profane your temple by giving it over to idols or pollutions of the world.
  10. Keep that temple free from pollutions—you are a treasure that is housing a treasure.
  11. Get it clean through repentance and the blood of Jesus, and keep it clean through the same careful measures. Value that treasure!
- C. Our treasure in the field
1. In addition to highly valuing and preserving those treasures, I want us to take this time to remember the task to which we were called in 2020.

2. **[image]** Our 2020 Vision: the Treasure in the Field. Let us recall these important words of Jesus that have been the focus of this year:  
*Matthew 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.*
3. Our passion for the labor in the field must not lose its value, for as you see here, there are still treasures in the field that need to be sacrificed for.
4. Jesus said those treasures are so valuable, they are worth selling all to obtain.
5. Remember, you were once buried under the weight of sin and this world's filth, but Jesus found you, cleaned you up, put His righteousness in you, and now you are among His treasures.
6. Someone found you buried in despair and made some sacrifices to bring you to Jesus.
7. How many others are out there who are still buried in the world and waiting for some laborer like you to find them?
8. Although we are not able to get out to the field as before, it is still possible even now to place some focus on those in the field.
9. Are you still working on those treasures-in-the making? Calling them? Texting them? Praying for them? Assuring them? If not, take note and do that this week.
10. This week is to be a week of preparing to return to the fields, so get refocused on those treasures in the field that God called us to reach.

D. Sons of Oil preserve the treasure

1. The point of these recent messages is that we use these times to develop our ability to **go with the flow of the Holy Ghost**, and develop the ability to allow these pressing times to keep us focused on God.  
*John 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*
2. You can hear and feel the wind and know it is there. So it is with the Spirit.
3. And that is a treasure worthy of growing and preserving.
4. We are called to be the anointed ones who are willing to **press out** the oil to keep the bowl full so our candlestick can burn brightly.
5. Keep churning and producing the oil.
6. Consider what happens to a machine when it is low on oil.
7. The lack of oil increases the friction between the moving parts. The increase of friction causes the works to heat up and begin squeaking and grinding and causes the parts to wear out quickly and be damaged.
8. If friction has been increasing, that is a sign of low oil.
9. Increased complaints are a sign of low oil.
10. A little more oil on the works will quiet your squeak, and help you set your sights on the treasure that must be preserved.
11. Let this not be the Dark Ages all over again, where we use what little oil we have to burn people at the stake with whom we have friction.

12. But let this be the Golden Age where we can and will grow in our production of oil and will glow more brightly with the glory of the Lord than before.
13. How many would you like to see baptized when we are back to church?
14. How many of those out in the field do you think you will help bring out of the field and be praying with when they are filled with the Holy Ghost in a home Bible study?
15. How many “shouting times” are ahead of us as see those treasures raise their hands in worship beside us in the sanctuary?
16. There is enough Treasure in this earthen vessel that we can share it with others.
17. Ask God how you can become one of the Sons of Fresh Oil that will keep the treasures of the kingdom highly valued, and not just surviving, but thriving.

#### IV. Conclusion: More oil means less friction

1. I will close with this final thought.
2. Jesus was a continual producer and not just a user. While there were times when He grew tired, hungry, and thirsty, but even in His time of need, He always ministered to others.
3. He arrived at Jacob’s well in Samaria, thirsty after a long journey from Galilee. Yet He took time to turn His need into ministering to the needs of the woman He met at the well.
4. On another day, Jesus was taking a nap after days of exhausting ministry, yet He took the time to minister to the needs of His disciples by calming a storm.
5. And then in His most momentous day ever, Jesus was suffering intense pain from being whipped, punched, brutalized, and crucified.
6. Although He did say, “I thirst,” He still took the time to minister to the thief who was thirsting for eternal life, and the crowd of abusers below Him who were in need of forgiveness.  
*Luke 23:34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.*
7. We must obtain more of a supply of the oil through our times of pressing...so yes, **we are users—using prayer, using intercessions, using God’s Word**—yes we are users.
8. But we are users to be producers. We carefully take it in and treasure it, so we can give it out to those the Lord places in our lives—those who are treasures in the field ready to be discovered.
9. Preserve the treasures: your promises of greater service to the Lord, the Holy Ghost within you, and those souls He wants you to reach.
10. We are almost out of this—don’t let the value of these be lost in our times.