

The Christian's Treasure Chest:

(a tool for self-awareness, communication, and more godly relationships)

Summary: It can be very difficult, even for Christians, to *confidently* and *consistently* say "No" to some things in order to say "Yes" to other things. That is because we relate to others by a regenerated spirit that values real treasure but in a corrupting body that values real trash. The nested boxes below demonstrate these dynamics.

- What we value (i.e., our goals and means to our goals) are kept in the smallest box (our spirit), whether they are actually Good or not: our reputation, safety, strength, intimacy, acceptance, wisdom, etc. Flowing from whatever our spirit treasures are our spirit's beliefs, whether they are actually True or not:
 - "Blessing"
 - "Injustice"
 - "Threat"
 - "Loss"
- Our spirit's beliefs, whether True or not, are experienced in our body (the middle box) as our emotions.
 - "Glad"
 - "Mad"
 - "Bad"
 - "Sad"
- These emotions prompt us to express our spirit's beliefs by moving toward or away from relationships.
 - "Pursue", a 'forward' motion
 - "Attack", a 'forward' motion
 - "Avoid", a 'backward' motion
 - "Pause", a 'backward' motion



- The words are aligned by color codes to show how our body's emotions flow from our spirit's beliefs.
- Our spirit is "within" our body, and our body is "within" our actions.
- Underneath each is "relationships" to show that someone always seems to hold our lives in their hands.

Purpose/Goal: We must "re-spect" the interaction of your spirit, emotions and actions in relationships. In other words, relook the questionable and reinforce the Good but difficult. Christians must not be blindly reactive to our body (the flesh) but proactive as part of His Body. Specifically, we must do at least the following:

- Measure our treasure only by what His Word clearly declares as "True" and "Good"
- Give up our bodily lusts, learned fears, false beliefs, worldly confidences, etc.
- Fill our souls with True beliefs by treasuring Jesus' Good character, commands, and promises.
- Entrust our treasures of time, spiritual gifts, resources, and even our needs to walk in love with them.

Scriptures on Good (and bad) investments in our "Treasure Chest"

Genesis 4:2-9. Abel treasured God's holiness and grace. So he believed in blessing by a blood sacrifice and pursued relationship with God. When Abel received God's blessing, this strengthened his spirit and relationship with God. Cain treasured himself and his accomplishments. He, therefore, believed in blessing by the fruit of his labor and pursued recognition by God. When Cain did not receive God's recognition, his face was "downcast" (shame, depression, and/or anger), and in jealousy killed Cain and avoided God.

Genesis 4:19-5:24. Cain's line continued treasuring their accomplishments (see especially Genesis 4:19-22). In his line's seventh generation, Lamech's spirit believed that he was entitled to murder and still receive God's protection. But Abel's line "called on the name of the Lord" (Genesis 4:24). In his line's seventh generation, Enoch's spirit believed in the Lord so intensely that God took him to heaven without dying.

Genesis through Esther reveals specific struggles and victories of our spirit in our body for relationships.

The Psalms generally highlight intense emotion(s) that come from specific beliefs of the author and prompts specific actions. If the writer's beliefs are True, we eventually hear the author's prayer to persevere. If the author's beliefs are not True, we eventually hear the Lord call him back to True beliefs in the Lord's character, commands and promises.

The Old Testament's prophets generally rebuke Israel's specific actions that come from false beliefs and ungodly treasures, and the prophets exhort Israel to right actions based on True beliefs and Good treasures.

Jesus says not to be terrified, depressed, vengeful, etc., but to value Him, believe in Him, and walk in love.

The Epistles call Christians to value Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection, commands, character, and promises. We are to resist the flesh and to treasure what is "Good", believe what is "True" and walk in love as His Body.

Matthew 5:21-48. "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago . . . but I tell you the truth . . ."

Matthew 13:44. "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."

Matthew 15:18. "But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them."

Matthew 26:14. "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Mark 15:34. And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").

Luke 12:33-34. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Romans 12:14-18. "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

2 Corinthians 4:7. "We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is God's and not ours."

Ephesians 4:26-27. "In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."

Philippians 3:18-19. "For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things."

James 1:2-4. "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Hebrew 12:17. "Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. Even though he sought the blessing with tears, he could not change what he had done."

1 John 3:19-20. "This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God"