

**“For where your treasure is,
there your heart will also be.” (Lk 12:34)**

The Evangelist Luke recounts this teaching of Jesus when he and his disciples were journeying toward Jerusalem, where Jesus would die and rise again. As they were walking, he spoke to them, calling them “a little flock”¹ and confiding in them what was most important for him, sharing the deepest part of his soul. He spoke about being detached from material goods, trusting in God’s loving care, and being both vigilant and industrious as we await the Kingdom of God.

In the preceding verses, Jesus had encouraged them to be detached from everything, even their own lives, and not to worry about their material needs, because their Father knows what they need. Instead, he invited them to “seek first the kingdom of God,” encouraging them to accumulate “an unfailing treasure in heaven.”² He did not tell them to be passive about earthly affairs or irresponsible in their work. Rather, his intention was to free their hearts from anxiety, worry, and fear.

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In this verse, “heart” refers to the unifying center of the person that gives meaning to one’s whole life. It’s a place where one is totally sincere, where there is no deception or disguise. The heart is where one’s true intentions are found, what one really thinks, believes and desires. The “treasure” that Jesus speaks of is whatever has most value for us and is therefore our priority in life. It’s whatever makes us feel secure in the present and for the future.

“In a world where everything is bought and sold,” Pope Francis wrote,³ “a person’s sense of worth seems to depend more and more on what they can accumulate with the power of money. We are constantly being pushed to keep buying, consuming and distracting ourselves, held captive by a demeaning system that prevents us from looking beyond our immediate needs.” And yet, in the heart of every woman and of every man, there is the urgent search for true happiness, for that which does not disappoint and that no material good can satisfy.

Chiara Lubich wrote in June 1944: “Yes, what you seek does exist! In your heart is an infinite and immortal longing, a hope that does not die, a faith that breaks through the darkness of death and is light for those who believe. Your hope is not in vain, your believing is not in vain! You hope, you believe so as to LOVE.”⁴

1. Lk 12:32

2. Lk 12:33

3. Pope Francis, *On the Human and Divine Love of the Heart of Jesus Christ*, n. 218.

4. Chiara Lubich, *Early Letters*, New City Press, NY, 2012, pg. 18.

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This Word of Life invites us to make an examination of conscience and ask: what is my treasure, what is it that I most cherish? It might be a variety of things, like economic status but also fame, success, or a position of power. Experience tells us that we need to return over and over again to the real life, the one that does not pass away, and live the radical and demanding life of evangelical love. As Chiara Lubich said: “It’s not enough for a Christian to be good, merciful, humble, meek, or patient. Christians have to show their neighbors the kind of love that Jesus taught us. (...) Love compels us to die for others - not just to be *ready* to die, but to actually *die*.”⁵

With every neighbor we encounter throughout the day—whether in the family, at work, or elsewhere—loving in this way means living not for ourselves, but for others. It means sharing in their experiences, and in doing so, we will come to know true freedom.

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5. Chiara Lubich, International Conference Call message, December 6, 1984.

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