

(Blackmore) -

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES

Eph. 3:18

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If there were some way that we could use a branding iron, and burn these words into our hearts and into our minds, it would enable us to keep the most valuable thing, priceless thing in this world.

*glowers -  
Hillary -  
I've shop -  
The old coat*

Just think - though I did not deserve it, and though I am the most useless Christian there is, I was the one chosen for the special joy of telling the Gentiles the glad news of the endless treasure available to them in Christ.

This phrase, the unsearchable riches of Christ, is found in Eph. 3:8. Paul had persecuted the Christians. He had changed through the power of Christ. And as Paul looks upon this, he wrote these words. V. 8-12. As he tells that he is a nobody. And yet, he has become rich. Unsearchable. Unaccountable. And the picture that we get, Dr. Mullins gives, is a trackless, inexplorable area. It is a vast place. You cannot measure it or map it out.

Paul seems to get this from the Old Testament. No doubt he read, Job. 5:9. "Which doth great things, and unsearchable marvelous things without number." Paul took that message of Job, who talked about God, being unsearchable. And he undertook to track out the unsearchable riches of Christ.

As he proceeds, he says, that he does so with humility. Now this is not a mock humility. But it is very genuine. Again in Rom. 11:33 - "oh the depth

of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out. 7/

Paul meant to say, here I am, less than the least of God's people. To do anything for Christ in his church, we must always remember that our greatness lies not in ourselves. But in our tasks, and in our message.

Weatherhead once talked to a boy who said that he planned to enter the ministry. He asked him, when he had come to this decision. He said I was moved as I attended chapel one day at school. And Weatherhead said, who was the preacher that day. The young man said, I have no idea. But I know that Christ spoke to my heart that morning. And that really is true preaching. He who serves Christ can never think of others look at himself. And praising himself. He must make them look at Christ. So many people are concerned about their own honor and prestige.

Paul meant to say that he was less than the least. That is, to say, Paul meant that he placed himself beneath the least. Now an old Puritan said, I do not quarrel with Paul's language, but I do dispute his right to push me out of my place.! Less than the least, said he, is my place.

The word "unsearchable" is a picture word of a (trackless) forest. Or a lake which you might walk around - and discover that it is part of a wide never-ending ocean which is immeasurable.

Paul said the treasures of Christ were inexhaustible. Beyond our counting or measuring, and there is no way to figure it up on an adding machine

or a calculator. John wrote once, that Jesus being full of grace and truth, and of his fullness - we have received, grace for grace. John 1:16.

Now lest we be too general about the unsearchable riches - let us take one or two, or more things and look at them in the light of this text.

### I. THE WORTH OF AN INDIVIDUAL

Now this is something that Paul had in mind. He said the ingathering of all men, of all nations, was part of the eternal purpose and design of God. He said here, that this Gospel was for the Gentile, and the Jews. It is worth much to the individual as it is missionary in its purpose.

We know that we owe much to Christ - who put a great value on the individual. In that day and time, life was cheap to them. For example, there is a book in the library in Oxford, England, an ancient piece of paper that was found on the dump heap of Alexandria. A Roman soldier has written on his papyrus a letter to his wife. He said he was hoping to come home soon. To be there when the baby arrived. However, if the baby should come before he got there - expose it if it be a female and preserve it if male. The rest of the letter was about minor details. What did he mean. If the baby was a girl - he wanted his wife to have a servant put it out in the sun. Or take it out to the rubbish heap. But if it was a boy, she was to wash him, nurse him, cloth him. The whole issue was one of great importance. Terrible things happen in our times. Though we recoil from such things - why? Because Christ has taught us that each life is dear and precious unto him.

We owe a lot to the ancient Jews. They knew that they were God's chosen people. And they took the rest of mankind as Gentile dogs. They also had particular parties among them. The Publicans and sinners. They did not keep the law as they did.

But Jesus befriended the out-cast. Dr. Hobbs mentioned the matter of abortion in his study. And how important an individual life ought to be in our eyes. And how sinful it was for people today, without any thought, just to put babies to death. And Jesus took people in that day - and he put a price tag on each soul. And the price was written in his blood. And we who follow after him have not always lived up to what Jesus taught.

One of the first acts, Constantine passed, as he became emperor, was to forbid the branding of debtors and slaves. The reason, it was wrong to mar the work of the creator.

During the awful persecution of the Huguenots in France. A Protestant sought refuge in the Netherlands. He says, let experiment with this worthless creature, dare you call one worthless. To whom Christ died - someone reminded him.

We do not know, I do not know, our scholars do not know all of the problems with the race, the abortions, and these things today. But we know that God made all people. And that Christ died for them.

The value of each person, whoever he is, and wherever he is - is a dear

priceless soul. And Christ has made it so.

## II. FORGIVENESS

This is a second treasure of Christ, in these unsearchable riches - which I think we ought to say a word about.

Forgiveness is related to sin. And sin is an old word. Some people may consider it out of date - the reality it stands for is quite modern.

Many things are wrong in our world today - and some of those wrong are in my heart and in your heart. If we are honest, all of us will have to admit that we are not as good as we ought to be. Like Paul, we'll have to say, we do things that we know we shouldn't. And we leave undone many things that we know we should do. Rom. 7:19. The Scripture says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Rom. 3:23.

Now that means that none of us has measured up to what God intended us to be. We have all fallen short of our pattern. We have violated what we know is right. We have transgressed and disobeyed the rules of conscience, and we have sinned against God. We have profaned his love.

Dr. Valentine said, in one of his messages - that he had not seen a revival in some time. Because revivals call for repentance and it is hard to find anybody today who will admit that they have committed any kind of sin.

Lady MacBeth in one of Shakespeare's plays - is a good example of what sin will do for us. You remember this woman plotted to kill the king. So that her husband could take his place. And when MacBeth quivered and weakened - she carried through the plot - stabbed the king - while he slept in their castle. She washed her hands of the blood and for awhile, the deed was hid. Her husband was crowned King - and she became Queen. But the deed was not done - when it was done. It sent out some lines of poison and death which reached far and near. Even to her soul. The blood kept coming back to her hands - though it seemed to her. She was known to wash those hands often. And she talked about those spots - she says, once, twice, why then 'tis time to do it. Hell is merky. Yet, who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him. What, will these hands never be clean? Here is the smell of the blood still. All the perfume of Arabia, will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh. That is in Act 5, Scene 1.

Alright, what are we to do with Lady MacBeth's hands? Of course, she only imagined that the blood was still there. But what are we going to do to convince her. Shall we tell her it is all in her mind. It really wasn't. There had been blood on her hands.

Now, if you wouldn't be much help - telling the poor woman that she killed the King. That wouldn't help a whole lot. But, would anything justify her taking life from another. Surely she was a product of her home, her society, her nation, her religion, or her parents or country. And maybe she could blame the social order for what happened. I wonder if that would help.

Are we to reason that she had been conditioned to believe that it was wrong to kill - and therefore excuse her. Just as a natural reaction to a frustration.

And then there was the perfume of Arabia, Will the fast cars, the endless partying, the whiskey, the drugs - will these things help? No, there is still the blood.

And Shakesphere's play whispers the word - foul whisperings are abroad, unnatural deeds, breed unnatural troubles, infected minds. God forgive us all. Look after her.

The root of the trouble lay beyond any position or skill - and the only thing that could be employed was divine help.

There is good news for Lady MacBeth - and for all of us. More needs that she had, the unsearchable riches that God will forgive us all. Yes, the good news is - there is forgiveness. The ancient Jew found something of this in the scape goat and the sacrifices that were placed on the altar.

It was in honest confession and repentance - such as David experienced. In the Psalms. And the Prophets.

But it is clearest in Jesus Christ. His life and teachings, and death - the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse and that blood alone, from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. And the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I John 1:7-9.

Gertrude Bohanna found this was true. As a spoiled daughter of a very wealthy parent, she had everything - tried everything - including three husbands. And a host of other men. She became an alcoholic and a drug addict. She was in and out of hospitals of all kinds. Illnesses, that she had - real and imaginary - she tried suicide. At last, a couple advised her to try God. But she laughed in their face. And later she returned to her home in the Mid-West. She found a letter from this Christian couple who promised to pray for her. And who asked her to read a little magazine that they had sent her. She read the first article entitled - "It Is Never Too Late To Start Over. By Dr. Samuel Schomaker.

Listen to her words. As she tells what happened. I stood up and dropped the book. I did what I had never done before. I went over to the bed, got down on my knees, and said - <sup>"God"</sup> if you are anywhere around, I wish you would help me because I sure need it.

In about 20 minutes - it was all over. Of course, there are no words. All I know is, it was more like a spiritual shower bath. I felt cleansed. I also felt welcome. I had never had a home. And have never made one. I felt welcomed and forgiven. And I know exactly who this was. I, who, had never known anything of God in my whole life - knew exactly who this was.

After a while, I stood up and said, thank you very much, sir. I don't know anything about this and I will have to start from scratch. But I'll tell you one thing - I'll never touch a drop of liquor as long as I live. And I never have. People said, I wish I had your character. Well, I don't have any character. It doesn't make sense for a woman of 53 to get on her knees and 20 minutes later - to get up with character. Something had been added alright, a

plus, and this plus is in the shape of a cross. And you and I call him Jesus Christ.

Forgiveness is a priceless thing. It is very costly. And it can only come out of love, with a repentent sinner. God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto himself. Behold, the manner of love that the Father hath bestowed upon us. That we should be called the sons of God.

The forgiveness of God, will bring great healing in this world, and to your life.

Yes, the unsearchable riches - say that you are worth something as an individual. It also says that forgiveness can become yours.

### III. HOPE BEYOND THE GRAVE

The last thing about the unsearchable riches - we want to say just a word. Is that beyond the grave. This is not easy to talk about. And of course, we all die. But we don't like to talk about it. But we must say something here. Death is the end - that is to the outer eye. And it is hard to prove that we are going to survive as a person. Beyond the grave. And some people say we ought to accept extinction. Or we ought to take a reason - that people who believe they return just to dust. The mighty Pharaoh. To preserve their bodies for the next life. American Indians placed an extra pair of moccasins

beside the body of the dead, just in case the happy hunting ground was farther than one pair would take him. All of these, are natural feelings about the beyond.

Jesus sided with the believers - John 11:25. He talked about the kingdom of Heaven. And the glorious fact that everything would be changed. Would Christ be not risen - we are all men most miserable. But now as Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. I Cor. 15:17-20.

It is really not easy for us to speak about Heaven. That unlimited country. We know the Scriptures - that they use the highest words on earth. They talk about gold, the most precious metal, in the ancient world. The streets being paved with it. The rivers of water that will be there - in contrast to the dry thirsty ground of this earth. And a city, where all of these pilgrims could go. And music that will be of the highest. And yet, this is not enough to describe the indescribable. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them that love him. I Cor. 2:9.

" Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it doth not appear what we shall now do. We know that when he shall appear that we shall be like him. But we shall see him like he is. I John 3:2.

Jesus said, in my Father's house are many mansions. And we have our own private homes and dwelling places here. Rented homes, resting places for the night. And Jesus uses this as a figure that people - he illustrates, he cheers them on his journey. That when they arrive, there will be a waiting place in the

Father's house, of many lodgings. He is going to prepare a room for you. And then I am going to come again, and receive you unto myself.

Could we imagine a home here, or a house with endless rooms. Favorites for me. No wonder, it is grace upon grace. It is unsearchable riches.

I read the story that was told to be the truth. Of one who had curiosity of what Heaven was like. It was on the Western frontier, Godly woman, the last of her family was dying in her cabin, and a good doctor was with her. As she felt life ebbing, she said, I know I am going to die and I am not afraid. But what do you think it is going to be like, in just a few minutes. The doctor was Christian too, but he hardly knew how to answer such a question. He heard a scratching at the door of the cabin. Do you hear that noise, he asked her. She replied, what is it, it is my dog Jack. He has been out waiting for me. And he has become tired of waiting there in the cold and the dark. And he wants to come in here to be with his master. He has never been in this room. He doesn't know whether it is hot or cold in here. All he knows is, that his master is in here, and he wants to be with him. If he can put his head on my knee and feel the pat of my hand, that would be Heaven for him. Don't you reckon it will be that way with us. If we can be with the Lord, won't that be Heaven.

That is one thing the unsearchable riches of Jesus offers. But the big question is - what are we going to do with these riches? Shall we keep them for ourselves and make fun of others - when Jesus says we are dear for him. And that he died for them too. And what of all our sins? Are we going to keep on worrying about them when Jesus has already offered to forgive us. And are we always going to be fearing death, when we have the opportunity of fellowship

with God.

Have you chosen poverty instead of the riches of Christ. Are you in crumbs today instead of eating at the Lord's table. A man works hard in America. And done well. Got married and sent his children to school. Always dreamed to return to the old country. At last, he had enough money. He bought his ticket and he lived on very little while he was traveling on the ship. He bought himself some cheese and crackers and took them aboard the ship. When the meals were served, he would go down to his room and eat his cheese and crackers. The first day, he made out alright - he was going back home. But soon he got awfully tired of those cheese and crackers. On the last day at sea, he was approached by a fellow traveler. Tell me, he said, how much does a meal cost in the dining room. A meal, the man said, I have no idea. Why do you ask. The poor man told his story. He said, I have a little money. But I am so tired of cheese and crackers, that I thought I might eat one meal before I got off of the ship. If it doesn't cost too much. My friend, he exclaimed, don't you know that the meals are included with the ticket. There has been a place for you at the table and the meal has been served - and you have been living off of cheese and crackers.

Now that is very sad. And so it is, for those today who live off of the things of this world, when God has prepared a great banquet of life. And love, and we need to taste and see that the Lord is good.

Grace means that God is rich enough to match every situation, any situation that life may bring to us. There is nothing of light, darkness, sunshine, or shadow, but what God is adequate.

Out before you is the untrackable, unexplored riches. Boundless  
resources of Christ - to meet every need of sinful humanity.