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A RESPONSIVE PEOPLE

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Three Weeks – One Big Sermon

‘A Generous God’, ‘A Jealous God’, ‘A Responsive People’

Challenge – talk about some ‘touchy’ areas

Hear my Heart

- Handle the Word of Truth carefully.**
- Desire to make disciples teaching them to obey all.....**
- Goal – God would expose lies, set free to respond**
- Understand – important in your walk with Jesus**

Not a Plea for Funds to Meet Needs

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Week One – A Generous God

- God initiates in offering to us without earning or deserving his:

Love & Affection

Protection & Provision

Position & Inheritance

Gifts & Empowerment

Abundant Joy, Perfect Peace, Eternal Hope

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Week Two – A Jealous God

This Sermon clearly For.....

- redeemed, alive, family, covenant relationship
- Themes of a Covenant
 - prescribed benefits, terms, consequences for failure
- Images of This Covenant
 - betrothed, husband wife, exclusive and consecrated

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God is Jealous towards his redeemed

- **First Commandment – No Other God’s**
 - many things that compete for our hearts & worship
 - clear expectation – I come first
- **Greatest Commandment (Matt. 22:37-38)**
 - “And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.”
 - worship the creator – not created things

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Knowing Our World is Broken by Sin

- while God is accomplishing His will and work

Principles and Practices for His Children

- No hidden agenda – been clear with us
- Unchanging – the same yesterday, today, forever
- Creator knows his creation – understands us
- Knows we face an enemy who seeks to destroy us
- Gave his people principles and practices to keep perspective and exercise trust and faith

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Biblical Principle of 1st Fruits

- from before the law – Cain & Able (Gen. 4)
- Principle – off the top, first fruits offered to God

1. Establishing His People

- Ex. 13:1 “The Lord said to Moses, “Consecrate to me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine.”

- see Nehemiah 10:35ff, Deut. 26

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- Exodus 22:29-30 “You shall not delay to offer from the fullness of your harvest and from the outflow of your presses. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to me. You shall do the same with your oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.”

2. Example of Jericho

- Desert Wandering
- Promised Land

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- Joshua 6:17-19 “And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the Lord for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the Lord; they shall go into the treasury of the Lord.”

- story of Achan

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3. What this declares

- God is the provider
- God is honored first
 - sacrifice acknowledging His place
- Declared Faith
 - God will provide for us with more

4. Design – Keep God in Right Perspective

- provider of all things, right to ask
- where my trust lies – God will provide

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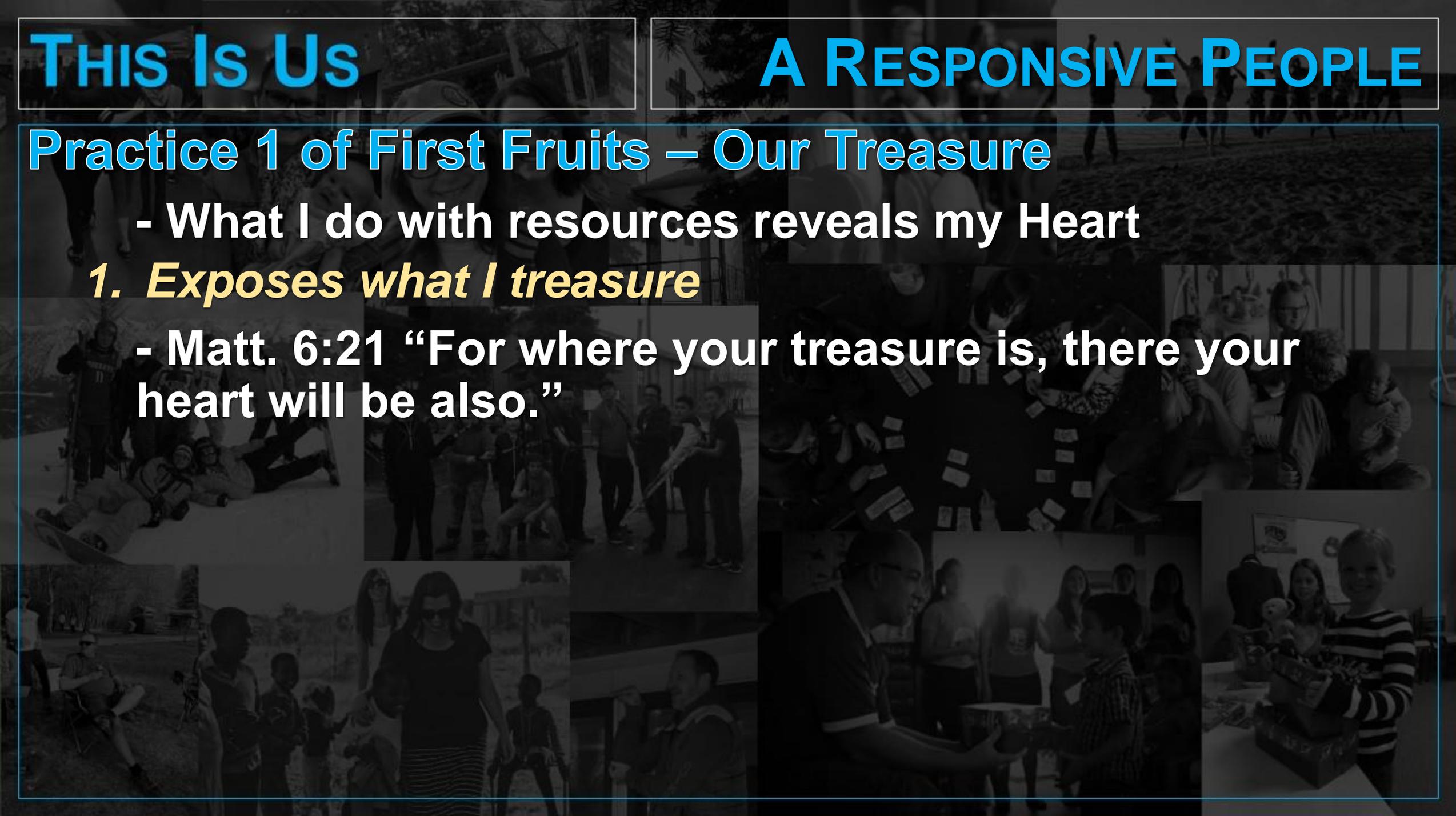
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Practice 1 of First Fruits – Our Treasure

- What I do with resources reveals my Heart

1. Exposes what I treasure

- Matt. 6:21 “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”



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2. Exposes what I trust

- Luke 12:32-34 “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

3. Exposes conviction & faith

- Luke 16:13 “No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

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- faithful with what God pours through my hands
- not about God not having enough
- **ditches** of percentages – what is the least I can do?
- **difficulty** of practice – poor habits, commitments
- **dealing** with our hearts – whose is it
- **deceived** by poor teaching:
 - Prosperity Gospel, Under Grace not Under the Law, Look After My Debts 1st, My Time is My Tithe, Don't Trust the Leadership, Want to When...

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So What?

- 1. God's place in our hearts not up for debate**
 - initiated, provided, covenanted, clear
- 2. God has graciously given principles and practices**
 - knowing how difficult this would be for us
- 3. First Fruits – clear principle to apply in our season**
 - unchanging God – how do we keep Him in the right place
- 4. Obedience & Love tied in Scripture**
- 5. Scarcity vs Generosity - Luke 12:32-34**



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