SCRIPTURE:
“Don’t store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also ... But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.” —Matthew 6:19–21, 33 (Christian Standard Bible)

MEDITATION:
One of our pets, Pumpie, snuck into my bedroom, and made herself a nest-bed in my sweatshirts. By the time I found her, she had chewed on four or five of them. In the grand scheme of things, sweatshirts are of little value eternally, and I have the financial means to replace them sooner than if they had worn out through normal wear and tear. Since this incident, Pumpie has passed away, and now when I wear the one remaining sweatshirt with just a few chew marks, I am fondly reminded of her.

Today I happen to be wearing said sweatshirt and thinking of how easily we can get caught up in our daily routine or in pursuing material wealth and possessions. Do I put the same, or higher, priority on investing in eternal treasure? What are some of the ways my energy can be spent on spiritual endeavors that will last in God’s kingdom? Can I make my mark on eternity like Pumpie made on my sweatshirts?

Let’s turn to scripture to get some ideas on building God’s kingdom. In Acts 6:1–4, seven godly men were appointed to oversee the distribution of food and care for widows. In Matthew 25:35–40, we see the importance of welcoming strangers, visiting people who are sick or in prison, and providing food, clean water, and clothing for the needy. The story of the Good Samaritan teaches us what it means to love our neighbor (Luke 10:31–37). Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8, and Matthew 28:19
tell us to go into all the world, preach the gospel, be God’s witnesses, and make disciples.

REFLECTION:
As members of the body of Christ, the church, we all have different gifts to do kingdom work. What are some ways you can seek first God’s kingdom?

What new opportunities are possible during a pandemic?

Here are some ideas to get started:

- Share your faith story with others, including the next generation, and especially in your own family. Consider writing it down or posting it on YouTube so your testimony can be passed on to others.
- Prepare a fresh or frozen meal for someone in need (due to illness, injury, surgery, new baby, etc.).
- Write letters of encouragement for those in nursing homes, living alone, in prison, isolated, etc.
- Set up phone/texting buddies to pray and keep in touch with a few friends or small group members. Include those who live alone or need encouragement.
- Volunteer at a food shelf, soup kitchen, or as foster care relief.
- Organize a social distanced food drive.
- Lead a Bible study over zoom or in an appropriate small group setting.
- Plan outside Christmas caroling or a secret Santa gift exchange event.
- Put together care packages for foster families or missionaries.
- Offer to tutor for families struggling with distance learning.
- Join a few friends in a progressive prayer drive through your community.
- Be part of a mentoring relationship, either as a mentor to disciple another or as someone looking to grow and be discipled in your faith.

What additional ideas do you have?

PRAYER:
O Lord our Lord, how majestic is your name! May we seek you first above everything else. Give us wisdom in how we can store up treasure in heaven. Thank you that your mercies are new each morning, and every day we have a new opportunity to choose to follow you. Thank you for your patience as we grow. Give us the courage to share your Good News and may our words be in harmony with our actions. Bless our efforts and bless others through us that they may see Jesus. May Jesus Christ be praised. Amen.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Kristine Johnson is an Advanced Systems Engineer at Honeywell Aerospace working on the GPAHRS (GPS-Aided High Integrity Attitude Heading Reference System), a next generation inertial navigation system which will be installed on various commercial, business, helicopter, and urban air mobility aircraft. Her roles include developing and verifying system requirements, and leading a team in environmental and electromagnetic qualification testing. Outside of work, Kristine is one of the hosts of Voices in the Wilderness, a show on YouTube interviewing leaders in the conversation on faith and science, and she oversees the Christian Women in Science Facebook page and is the President of the North Star Chapter of the ASA. Kristine enjoys spending time with her husband and two daughters, and she is also a professional face painter.