

The Deceitfulness of Riches

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Proverbs 13:7 There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.

Ecclesiastes 9:11 I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

1 John 2:15-17 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

- I. Riches are really nothing more than the ability to indulge oneself in all that is in the world.
 - A. The lust of the eyes – I can have anything I want.
 - B. The lust of the flesh – I can indulge any carnal appetite I want, and as much as I want.
 - C. The pride of life – My riches make it obvious to everyone that I can do what I want and have what I want; they set me apart from other men and above them.
 - D. The appeal of riches and the desire to have them is proportional to our love for the world.
 - 1. How much we desire riches shows how much we love the world.
 - 2. The importance and value we put on riches reveals how much we love the world or how much we love and trust God.
 - E. Modern society has substituted the word “security” for the word “riches.”
 - 1. It is considered a trait of a wise man to desire riches, because it means security.
 - 2. The whole thing means that the wise man will lay up for himself treasures on earth, so that he does not have to depend upon God.
 - F. Very few believe in living by faith anymore and most have no idea what it means.
 - G. Almost all people who profess to be Christians are wowed and impressed by anyone who has made a lot of money, or promises to show them how to make a lot of money.
 - H. Everyone wants to get rich; that would be the best scenario most people can imagine in their life.
- II. We need to always remember that the things of this world are all going to pass away.

Proverbs 27:24 For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?

- A. So even if we could manage to get rich we do not get to keep it.
 - 1. Riches can disappear as quickly as they came:

Proverbs 23:5 Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

- B. Even if we do get rich we will find that like all Satan’s lies, it does not make us happy.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.

- C. It is an easily observable fact through all the ages that having riches does not make a person happy, but quite the contrary, it is usually the ruination of the life.

Matthew 13:22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

- D. Once we eat the fruit we find out that it is not like we thought it would be.
- E. Our carnal desires were not designed for a continual feast, but for an occasional moment.
 - 1. When our appetite is satisfied we no longer desire the thing.
- F. So to have abundance turns out to be a burden and not a blessing at all.

Ecclesiastes 5:12 The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

- 1. The life is consumed with keeping the riches, or figuring out something to do with them.
- G. Riches are a great hindrance to salvation.

Matthew 19:23-24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

- H. Riches prevent you from having true friends.

Proverbs 19:4 Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour.

Proverbs 19:6 Many will intreat the favour of the prince: and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.

III. As followers of Christ we must realize and recognize the difference between earthly treasures and the true riches, and not set our heart on things of this world.

Proverbs 23:17 Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

Proverbs 8:18 Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. (wisdom)

Proverbs 10:22 The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Proverbs 22:4 By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life.

Proverbs 23:4 Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. (Do not make that your goal)

Psalms 62:10 Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them. (be like Job)

1 Timothy 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

Proverbs 28:6 Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.

James 2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?