



CAPITOL COMMISSION

True Riches (Proverbs 23:4-5)

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Announcement for loyal readers: Study notes will not be printed next week, March 3. I will be away for a Shepherd's Conference. Rep. Bill Wolf is teaching the morning study and the noon group is sharing fellowship & devotions.

INTRODUCTION

Most who read these notes are not obsessed with becoming rich, but many are striving to produce just a little more revenue. This is true for me as well as it is for the Kansas Secretary of Revenue and the IRS.

One of the richest men of the last century was John D. Rockefeller. When asked how much **more** he sought to make, John stated: "Just a little more."¹ To Rockefeller's credit, he spent the last years of his life giving away his fortune for the good of humanity. This philanthropic activity began after a team of doctors predicted that his life would soon end due to a series of illnesses. Rockefeller lived to be ninety-eight! Most likely his philanthropy greatly extended his life.

CONTROL YOUR PASSION

Proverbs 23:4-5 Don't wear yourself out trying to get rich; be wise enough to control yourself. Wealth can vanish in the wink of an eye. It can seem to grow wings and fly away like an eagle.²

Rockefeller's example may be warning us how our passion for money can bring us stress, wear us out or make us sick. We also understand through recent experience the reference in this Proverb to money "flying away." In the 2008 stock market crash, professional fund managers lost 25 to 50% of the principle in our public and personal investment accounts. Some anxiety is useful in keeping us working. The Scriptures admonish us to provide for our own families (1Timothy 5:8). We should not allow our work to take over our lives, but instead remember to budget quality time for family and friends.

IS MONEY YOUR IDOL?

Proverbs 18:10-12 The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. The wealth of the rich is their fortified city; they imagine it an unscalable wall.³

Webster⁴ defines an idol as an image, person, or object that is adored. An idol usurps the place of God. Money itself is not the problem; but it can become a major distraction. We have nothing left when our money is gone (or our time on earth is over). Do we spend an unreasonable amount of time and emotion focusing on money?

WHERE DO YOU PUT YOUR TRUST?

Mark 10:23-27 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."⁵

BIBLE STUDIES

LEADERS/LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAYS 7-7:50 AM, CAPITOL - ROOM 142 SOUTH
STAFF & GUESTS: WEDNESDAYS 12:05 - 12:55 PM, CAPITOL - ROOM 142 S (UNLESS OTHERWISE POSTED)

Kansas

True Riches

WISDOM FOR TODAY

Ecclesiastes 5:12-14 People who work hard sleep well, whether they eat little or much. But the rich seldom get a good night's sleep. There is another serious problem I have seen under the sun. Hoarding riches harms the saver. Money is put into risky investments that turn sour, and everything is lost. In the end, there is nothing left to pass on to one's children.⁶

Solomon reminds the reader that a long day of work helps us to sleep well. We are less concerned about the variety of our daily meals and other trivial matters. However, folks with an abundance of money have much to worry about. Money can be a dangerous inheritance. In contrast, it seems better to leave our children a legacy of faith, hope and love.

Proverbs 30:7-9 "I ask two things from you, Lord. Don't refuse me before I die. Keep me from lying and being dishonest. And don't make me either rich or poor; just give me enough food for each day. If I have too much, I might reject you and say, 'I don't know the LORD.' If I am poor, I might steal and disgrace the name of my God.⁷

In wisdom, we should ask for an honest heart and sufficient grace to avoid the extremes of poverty or riches. We are reminded that an arrogant spirit distances us from God.

STAY PRODUCTIVE & FAITHFUL

Proverbs 27:23-24 Be sure you know how your sheep are doing, and pay attention to the condition of your cattle. Riches will not go on forever, nor do governments go on forever.⁸

We should focus on our skills and productivity. This may be what we have left when the economy and our investments falter. Changes in government may threaten property and businesses. What sustains us is our trust in the Lord.

CONCLUSION

Ben Franklin states: "Money never made a man happy yet, nor will it. There is nothing in its nature to produce happiness. The more a man has, the more he wants. Instead of its filling a vacuum, it makes one. If it satisfies one want, it doubles and trebles that want another way. That was a true proverb of a wise man; rely upon it; "better is little with fear of the Lord, than great treasure, and trouble therewith."⁹

¹ John Bartlett. Bartlett's Familiar Quotations. (Little, Brown and Co.) 2002. p574.

² The Holy Bible. New Century Version. (Thomas Nelson Inc.). 2005.

³ The Holy Bible. New International Version. (Biblica). 2005.

⁴ Noah Webster. American Dictionary of the English Language. (Webster). 1828.

⁵ The Holy Bible. New King James Version. (Thomas Nelson, Inc.). 1982

⁶ The Holy Bible. New Living Translation. (Tyndale House). 2004.

⁷ The Holy Bible. New Century Version. (Thomas Nelson Inc.). 2005.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Benjamin_Franklin