

THE BIBLE VIEW

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The Rich Poor Man

D. L. Moody

I heard of a farmer who, when a friend of mine called upon him to give something to a Christian ministry, promptly wrote a check for ten thousand dollars. He wanted the agent to have dinner with him.

After they had dined, the farmer took the man out on the verandah and pointed to the rich lands sweeping far away, laden with rich products. "Look over these lands," said the farmer, "They are all mine." He took him to the pasture and showed the man the choice stock, the fine horses he had, and then pointed to a little town, and then to a large house where he lived. His face lit up with pride as he said, "They are all mine. I came here when a poor boy, and I have earned all that you see."

When he got through, my friend asked him, "Well, what have you got up yonder?"

"Where?" replied the farmer.

"What have you got in Heaven?"

"Well," said the farmer, "I haven't anything there."

"What!" replied my friend, "you, a man of your discretion, wisdom, and business ability have made no provision for your eternal future?"

He hadn't, and in a few weeks, he died — a rich man here and a beggar in eternity. A man may be wise in the eyes of the world to pursue this course, but he can be a fool in the sight of God. Wealth to most men can be nothing more or less than a great rock upon which their eternity is wrecked.

"No man can tell whether he is rich or poor by turning to his accounting ledger. It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich according to what he is, not according to what he has." — Beecher

Money Isn't Everything

Bill Brinkworth

Despite popular opinion, having wealth is not the way to happiness. Also, contrary to some “religious” teachings, God does not necessarily want everyone rich either. Wealth brings its own set of problems, many of them being spiritual.

The danger of having much is that with it comes many temptations (I Timothy 6:9). It is easy to covet more. Few wealthy people stop after reaching their initial goal of possessions. They often desire “just a little more.” Covetousness soon is a driving sin in their life. It is not long after that a “love” for money develops, and that is where many get lost in what is important in life.

Many say, “If I had a lot of money, I would not be tempted.” Although that is possible, look around and see what destruction having a lot has caused others:

- Many put a priority on keeping what they have over spending time with their families and doing what is important in this life. “I have to go to work this weekend to pay the bills for what we have.” Work becomes their master, rather than the Lord.
- Love for wealth causes many not to want to part with it; “I can’t afford to give money to my church. I need it to pay my bills.”
- I finally understand why so many people get upset when a preacher preaches on giving to the Lord. When he does, those that love money have made it their “god,” and they get very upset when it appears someone is taking away their “religion.”
- Possession of much fools many into thinking they do not need God. I remember knocking on a wealthy man’s door and asking him if he was saved and on the way to Heaven. His response was, “Look around at what I have. Does it look like I need God? Look what I have accomplished without Him.” That man never understood Who allowed him to breathe each day and allowed him to earn anything he had.
- Possession often leads to covetousness, and coveting is a sin (Exodus 20:17). It can also lead to other sins, such as lying and murder to keep what you have, idolatry when adoring it, stealing or deception to get more

Money itself is not evil (I Timothy 6:10). However, possessing it can lead to problems that will take one far away from what is really important in this life, and certainly take one further from God than he would have ever imagined. It is better to be content with what you already have (I Tim. 6:6). Concentrate more on building Christian character that will benefit you and others (I Tim. 6:11- 12).

“Riches either serve or govern the possessor.” — *Horace*

The Love of Money

Buchanan

The love of money, like all other passions, grows by what it feeds on. Indulgence serves only to strengthen it, and to render it the more insatiable. What seemed a fortune before it was attained dwindles into comparative poverty when it has been acquired.

The height which looked so lofty when viewed from the plain sinks to the level of the plain itself. When standing on its summit, the climber contrasts it with the far loftier eminences which have

now come into view. He finds himself only as yet at the bottom of a vast mountain chain. The higher he ascends, the more distinctly this fact appears, and so it is with the love of money.

A sum that looked so large in his eye at the outset, shrinks by and by into a trifle. Once it seemed wealth, now it appears the barest competence. It is measured every year by a new standard, the standard of a higher grade of society, of a more ambitious style of living, of new wants and more expensive tastes. Things which at one time would have been accounted luxuries have now become the merest necessities of life. That which at an earlier stage of his career would have been accounted extravagance, have now become a "need." The point at which he is prepared to say that it is enough is like the horizon, to which the traveler, however far and however fast he journeys, never gets any nearer.

“Just as our views expand the higher we ascend the steep of a vast mountain, so do our wishes widen the further we advance in wealth.” — Mursell

The Heart of the Giver

Bill Brinkworth

There is nothing we do that Heaven does not know. In Luke 21:1-4 (Also in Mark 12:41-44), this is illustrated by Jesus' observation of people giving at a temple.

Jesus was standing by the temple treasury and watched those putting in their money to help meet the needs of the synagogue. From what was said in those verses, we can learn much about what He knew about the givers then and most likely knows about those that give today. We see that Jesus knew:

- Who gave. He saw the rich and the poor give and knew who did not give.
- How much they physically gave. Jesus knew exactly how much a poor, widow woman gave. He knew she gave two of the smallest Greek copper coins, "mites", to help provide for the temple's upkeep. He also knew that rich people gave far more.
- How much their gift meant to the giver. Jesus knew the rich gave out of their extra. It was not much of a sacrifice to them; then the widow gave. Although her offering was nothing compared to what the wealthy gave, the Saviour knew that she gave all that she had. He knew the burden she had for the work of the Lord and how giving to it was more important to her than her many earthly needs. He knew her giving was sacrificial.

Keep Jesus' observance in mind the next time you give to your church ministry. He knows if you give or not, and how much you give. Most importantly, He knows what the value of the gift meant to you. Fifty cents in the offering plate may have been a lot 75 years ago, but today it is less than what a person would pay for coffee. Giving a pittance, or not as much as we could be giving, is just showing God the value we place on His ministry.

God does not need our money. Certainly, He could point any pastor to the largest diamond in the world or a five-pound golden nugget to meet the ministry needs. He, however, chooses for us to sacrificially give our best to keep the Gospel going out to the world and to meet the needs of others. Our giving shows Him how important our local church is to us. What does He know about your giving?

“Give God what's right, not what's left!”

Luke 12:16-21

“And he [Jesus] spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: 17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. 20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

“Let the moment come when nothing is left but life, and you will find that you do not hesitate over the fate of material possessions.” — *Richenbacker*