
Words of Truth

What Profit Is There Even In Gaining The Whole World?

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Materialism, lacking contentment, seeking earthly wealth, and so on are HUGE problems in our society. I spent ten minutes one morning watching the local news to get the forecast. In that ten minutes there were two commercials telling me I needed a better car, one about getting a new house, and a commercial telling me to get plastic surgery for an ideal body. I never did get the whole forecast. I shut off the television and thought considerably about how much advertising is about trying to make us want more, better, newer, etc.

Happiness has never been nor will ever be achieved by gaining things in this lifetime. Even the most ungodly, carnally minded person knows that earthy gains are temporary. You don't need the Scriptures to see that. Every hospital, doctor's office, funeral home, cemetery, obituary, life insurance policy, and countless other things about us remind us life is fragile. Solomon wrote: *"A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth. It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth... He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes? 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. There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind"* (Ecclesiastes 7:1-4; 5:10-16)?

We see with our eyes what Solomon said. We read those and other Scriptures that state the same things (I Timothy 6:6-12; 17-19). How could any of us ever think we would be happy by gaining more material things? What's the new house, car, clothes, shoes, electronics, etc. going to really do for your happiness? Almost everything in this world will get old and cease being profitable even before the world ends. What is lasting (Isaiah 51:6 and Luke 12:13-40)? What have you gained by "getting it all" in regard to things of this world?

If You Gain The World, But Lose Your Soul

Consider what Jesus said: *“And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels”* (Mark 8:31-38).

Our article last week concluded with some Scriptures for us to consider. Those Scriptures were: Psalms 49:1-20, Proverbs 23:5, and I John 2:15-17. Each of those passages teach that earthly wealth is temporary. What should that realization do for us? The Lord told Israel, under a carnal law without the promises we have today (Hebrews 7:1-12:3), the following: *“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David”* (Isaiah 55:1-3). How much more does that apply to you and I? Think about that.

We have a promise of a better home (John 14:1-3). They of old were kept in the dark concerning the promises that we now look forward to (I Peter 1:3-12). If those who served under the Old Law should have been content with the promises of God, shouldn't we whom have better promises be much more content? If you gained the possessions of this whole world, all you would essentially own is temporary firewood (Mark 13:31 and II Peter 3:10). Earthly riches will not last forever no matter how much you acquire (Proverbs 11:4; 27:24).

Conclusion

There is no enduring profit in things of this world (Psalms 39:1-6 and Ecclesiastes 2:1-26). Yet, there are the unsearchable riches of Christ (Ephesians 3:8) prepared for those of us whom set our affections on things above (Matthew 25:34 and Colossians 1:12). Don't exchange the eternal for the temporary.