

Wealth and Contentment

No study of the book of Proverbs would be complete without considering the connection between wisdom and wealth. So what does Proverbs have to say about wealth and contentment?

1. Proverbs presents wealth as a fruit of wisdom.

Proverbs 21:20. Precious treasure and oil are in a wise man's dwelling, but a foolish man devours it.

2. Conversely, Proverbs explains that foolishness leads to squandering resources.

Proverbs 21:17. Whoever loves pleasure will be a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not be rich.

Proverbs 29:3. He who loves wisdom makes his father glad, but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth.

3. Proverbs instructs us to use our wealth to honor the Lord.

Proverbs 3:9-10. Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

4. Proverbs commends wealth gained through diligence over wealth gained quickly.

Proverbs 13:11. Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.

Proverbs 21:5. The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.

5. Proverbs reminds us that there are many things more important than wealth.

*Proverbs 22:1. A **good name** is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.*

*Proverbs 3:13-15. Blessed is the one who finds **wisdom**, and the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her.*

*Proverbs 11:4. Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but **righteousness** delivers from death.*

*Proverbs 19:22-23. What is desired in a man is steadfast love, and a poor man is better than a liar [**honesty**]. **The fear of the LORD** leads to life, and whoever has it rests satisfied; he will*

not be visited by harm.

*Proverbs 15:16. Better is a little with **the fear of the Lord** than great treasure and trouble with it.*

6. Proverbs warns that wealth is an alluring trap.

Proverbs 23:1-7. When you sit down to eat with a ruler, observe carefully what is before you, and put a knife to your throat if you are given to appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food. Do not toil to acquire wealth; be discerning enough to desist. When your eyes light on it, it is gone, for suddenly it sprouts wings, flying like an eagle toward heaven. Here the

7. Ultimately, Proverbs teaches that the security of wealth is not to be trusted.

Proverbs 11:28. Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.

Proverbs 18:10-11. The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe. A rich man's wealth is his strong city, and like a high wall in his imagination.

So, what do we do?

1. Resist Greed by prioritizing righteousness over riches.

Proverbs 15:27. Whoever is greedy for unjust gain troubles his own household, but he who hates bribes will live.

Proverbs 1:18-19 ESV. they set an ambush for their own lives. Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain; it takes away the life of its possessors.

2. Rediscover Generosity by prioritizing service over security.

Proverbs 11:24-26. One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered. The people curse him who holds back grain, but a blessing is on the head of him who sells it.

3. Respect God's Provision by prioritizing diligence over desire.

Proverbs 27:23-27. Know well the condition of your flocks, and give attention to your herds, for riches do not last forever; and does a crown endure to all generations? When the grass is gone and the new growth appears and the vegetation of the mountains is gathered, the lambs will provide your clothing, and the goats the price of a field. There will be enough goats' milk for your food, for the food of your household and maintenance for your girls.

Look to Christ - It's interesting that one of the last things the book of Proverbs has to say

about wealth reminds us that wealth is not the point of life.

Proverbs 30:7-9. Two things I ask of you; deny them not to me before I die: Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the LORD?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.

Jesus actually traded all the wealth of the universe to bear the burden and punishment of our sin as a demonstration of God's love. He left His strong position to identify with us in our weakness. For our sakes and for our access to the Kingdom of God, though he was rich he became poor for us, to save us from a life of greed and the false security of wealth.