

## "THE FACTS OF THE MATTER"

"A weekly letter of encouragement to business and professional men and women"

December 28, 2005

Good Morning!

### WEALTH – WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT IT? (Part #1)

Perhaps some of us share Woody Allen's confused perspective: *"If only God would give me some clear sign! Like making a deposit in my name in a Swiss bank account."*

On a more serious note, Robert J. McCracken comments, *"Get to know two things about a man – how he earns his money and how he spends it – and you have the clue to his character, for you have a searchlight that shows up the inmost recesses of his soul. You know all you need to know about his standards, his motives, his driving desires, his real religion."*

Many believers in Christ wonder if it is OK to be wealthy. Is it more spiritual to be relatively poor or of modest means? How do I deal with the success when it comes my way? Is it God's blessing, or should I feel guilty about it? How do I keep the balance between enjoying the material blessings and not being corrupted by greed and pride?

The Scriptures teach,

**Wealth may be the result of hard work, or the special blessing of God:** *"Lazy people are soon poor; hard workers get rich...The blessing of the Lord brings wealth, and he adds no trouble to it." (Prov. 10:4; 10:22). "God said to Solomon, 'Because your greatest desire is to help your people, and you did not ask for personal wealth and honor or the death of your enemies or even a long life, but rather you asked for wisdom and knowledge to properly govern my people, I will certainly give you the wisdom and knowledge you requested. And I will also give you riches, wealth, and honor such as no other king has ever had before you or will ever have again!'" (2 Chron. 1:11,12) (See Deut. 6:10,11; Prov. 13:4; Hos. 2:8; 1 Cor. 15:58)*

**Wealth can be used to enhance our relationship to God and bless others:** *"And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints...Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 8:1-4; 9:7)*

**Wealth carries with it the potential for certain sins** such as pride (1 Tim. 6:17), oppression of the poor (Jms. 2:6), selfishness (Lk. 12 and 16), dishonesty (Lk. 19:10), conceit (Prov. 28:11), and trusting in it for security. (Prov. 18:11)

**Wealth and God cannot be equally served:** *"No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money." (Lk.16:13) (See Josh. 24:15; Rom. 6:16-22; 8:5-8; Jms. 4:4; 1 Jn. 2:15,16)*

**Wealth can be a seductive force for those ministering for God:** *“Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve...There are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach--and that for the sake of dishonest gain.”* (I Pet. 5:2; Tit. 1:10b,11) (See 1 Tim. 3:2,3,8)

**My prayer is that you are having a great week!**

**R. Dwight Hill**

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