

Should we strive for Riches and Money?

Our modern community is obsessed by money matters. Whether it is interest rates, tax rates, costs of goods, lotteries, property or our earnings, we are preoccupied to make sure we get the best deal. When we buy a house or a car, we haggle for the best price. At work we strive to maximise our earnings by promotion or extra hours; but is it right to strive for the big money?

Consider the following Bible quotes:

1 Tim. 6:9-10

But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Luke 12:15

And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Proverbs 16:8.

Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with out right.

The Bible standard is to not strive for money. Jesus says:

Luke 12:27-28

Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

So we don't need to go overboard chasing money, but we can be careful with what we have. It is all about keeping things in their correct place. To have a lot of money is nothing in the end, if that is the aim, for it all will pass on to others when we die; in the end we must look to what God requires of us and to set our behaviour within His guidelines.

John the Baptist, who preceded Jesus, was asked by soldiers what they should do. John said this to them: Luke 3:14

And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

Being content with what they were given was not the normal behaviour for these men. They were used to extorting extra money from the general population of the conquered lands. John, (remembering that he himself had nothing) is telling them that they needed to be happy with what they were paid.

Solomon, a man, a king who was very wealthy, makes it very plain that wealth is not worth striving for. Proverbs 23:4

Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

If we search the Bible, there is very little which allows for the seeking after wealth. The Bible is all about seeking something which today is intangible, but may be obtained later. God has offered people a way out of the cycle of sin and death, if they seek it. This takes effort and is incompatible with the obsession of becoming wealthy.

Jesus tells us that it is exceptionally difficult, but not impossible, for the rich to gain a place in God's kingdom. He says: Matthew 19:23

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily / say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Our modern society places a high social value on how much a person has in money and assets. It is not for the followers of Jesus to try to increase what we have as our daily object, We need to put God first and anything belonging to this world second. If we do gain wealth by inheritance or other unlikely means, we must not let that wealth be a ruler in our lives. It is our task to seek for the Kingdom of God. If riches come to us we must use them wisely and not accumulate them to our own eventual destruction.