

On a recent visit to a children's hospital visiting my niece I got a huge wake-up call about the fragility of life. Wandering through various wards I saw some of the saddest sights. To see children suffering from different illnesses shook me mainly because these kids had not really had the opportunity to live life.

What is paramount to me is making sure that my life counts for God. I think one of the most sobering chapters in the bible is Numbers 14 when God forgives the nation of Israel for their sin of refusing to enter the Promised Land, but His forgiveness did not free them from the consequences of their sin.

All those 20-years-old and over were doomed to wander in the wilderness for another 38 years and would never enter the Promised Land. In effect what this meant was that a whole generation would live and die without ever counting for God. Certainly from my perspective this is not the sort of legacy I want to leave. What is critical to the sort of legacy we leave is how we spend our money and indeed acquire it.

In **PSALM 49** the danger of wealth both in terms of having it and or desiring it, can have a huge impact on our walk with God. The psalmist is so concerned about what he is saying that he strongly emphasizes that everyone needs to hear this message, no matter what country you come from, or what people group you come from, or what position you hold in the community, or whether you are rich or poor. The psalmist is very concerned that we have a heart of wisdom in terms of our attitude towards wealth regardless of our lot in life.

When we are looking to manage what God has so generously given to us the overarching principle is Matthew 6v33 which says; "But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all those things shall be added to you." So with that in mind there are a number of things we need to be mindful of when it comes to wealth.

PRAISE the Lord for:

- The editions we produce in different languages and the people who translate these stories for us
- Great result from the Portuguese Military edition being distributed to four countries with two further editions in the pipe line
- A fantastic team trip to Broome with opportunities to share Christ one on one, plus other outreach ministries in conjunction with local churches

Wealth cannot keep us from death, Psalm 49:5-12. Wealth can bring a false sense of security as to who is in control of life. Wealth can distract us from trusting in the true and living God, and I am sure that is why God allows so few of us to acquire wealth. Charles Spurgeon knew the dangers of wealth when he said; "So often when gold comes into the house, the gospel goes out." Spurgeon and the writer of this psalm were very aware that wealth can corrupt.

Wealth cannot purchase immortality. I remember when Lang Hancock [WA mining magnate] died that it was reported in the media that he had a fully equipped hospital facility in his home. Regardless of how much money was invested in that facility, Lang was unable to purchase immortality.

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OVER**

We need to see that eternity with God is not something that can be purchased at a supermarket. Salvation is not something that is achieved but received. Wealth cannot obtain us some special privilege to get us into heaven, but it can be invested wisely to bring about eternal dividends in mission.

We need to see that our redemption is costly because it cost the life of God's only Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus willingly gave His life a ransom for many and He did it free of charge, because of the joy that was set before Him. In other words He knew what it was going to achieve down through the years as people committed their lives to Him.

Redemption is the **only way** to deal with the bondage of sin and death, and again this isn't something we acquire by wealth. Also it's important we understand that redemption is not transferable. Every person who is a Christian has become so by a personal step of faith in the finished work of Calvary. Redemption is not something you catch, like a cold, but happens because of what you do.

Wealth acquisition can be foolish if that is the sole purpose of your life. The psalmist says in v10; "Likewise the fool and the senseless person perish and leave their wealth to others." They think their houses will last forever. The idea here is the person wants to leave a legacy of wealth for their family, and to continue the family name. They have failed to see that the best legacy to any family is a Godly one. This is why it is so important that we are wise stewards of the wealth that God has given to us. With generous giving to missions and to the church we can have a legacy that is eternal in terms of converts.

Wealth cannot determine our destiny v13-15. Such thinking is foolish because if it were true then we would not need Jesus as our redeemer. He would have been superfluous to our need of salvation. Psalms 14 and 53 both start with the statement; "The fool has said in his heart there is no God." Acquiring wealth as an end in itself is another way of saying there is no God. As a consequence these people have a reason to fear death. What is even sadder is that all they have worked for and valued most in life will be consumed in their death. This is not the sort of legacy you want to be known for. Only God can determine our destiny and that is why a decision to follow Christ, not our declaration of wealth, puts us on the road to heaven.

- PRAYER needed for:**
- The follow up on the many contacts made during Impact Broome trip as over 3000 papers were distributed
 - The churches (Broome Anglican + Baptist) we worked with as they continue to outreach into their community
 - Editions being distributed this month – Australia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, USA
 - The paper distribution around the world that God will use each seed to draw people to Himself

Wealth must not dictate our desires v16-20. What is critical in all of this is keeping our eyes on eternity day-by-day until we go to be with Jesus. Things to watch out for in our daily walk with God – (i) Be wary of becoming covetous (ii) Keep a right perspective on wealth (iii) Be wary of how wealth can feed the self-nature (iv) Realise that wealth is temporary and salvation is eternal (v) Invest your wealth for eternal purposes.

{ CARL CARMODY }
EDITOR CHALLENGE

Challenge Direct Deposit details :
BSB: 066162 (Commbank)
Account: 00900455

AU.CHALLENGE.NEWS
Contact us by phone (08) 9453 3311
Email: info@challengenews.org