

Minister's Message – August 2005

\$\$ \$10million to Spend \$\$

He went to Las Vegas and came back with \$10m in his pocket. It was one happy man that I saw on the news the other night. He had to pay some tax in the US and the tax man in Australia will also take his share – but what will he do with all this money? He will not need to work any more. Will he have lots of friends and be able to enjoy fast cars and fine restaurants? \$10 million – wow! But where will he be in ten years time; that is the question.

You might be envious of him and so might I. So I will not share my own opinion but some truths from the Word of God, the Bible. You may not have heard of Agur, but he was a wise man who shared his wisdom in the book called Proverbs (30:8). Agur actually prayed to God that he would not be rich. I wonder how many times God hears from people who want to be rich – are you one of them? Well Agur did not want to be rich.

Why did Agur not want to be rich? He said in his prayer *lest I be full and deny you, and say 'who is the Lord'?* Riches are not evil in themselves – gold or pieces of coloured paper we call money cannot be evil. But Agur saw the danger of setting his heart upon such things – he feared he would forget the Lord. This is just what many people did in his day and still do today.

Before Agur came along Moses warned the people of God not to forget the Lord when they came into the rich and prosperous land of Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey (Deuteronomy 6:12). God gave them everything as he brought them into this land, being the loving and gracious Father that he is. But he knew that like ungrateful children they might well take his gifts without a word of thanks and with no further thought of the Giver (read on in this Bible passage to see what happens to those who forget the Lord).

Jesus also warns us of the danger of riches. *You cannot serve two masters* he said...*you cannot serve God and money* (Matthew 6:24). Inevitably if you go after money you will forget the Lord – even if you do keep up the outward rituals. Jesus told a parable about a man who got richer and richer but had no thought of God. He was called a fool and he perished (Luke 12:13f).

The apostle Paul says *those who want to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts* (I Timothy 6:9). This is exactly what happens to many rich people. They do not find happiness or contentment in their riches but rather sorrow, emptiness and destruction of their souls – if not their bodies also.

Riches may well lead you to forget God. Is it not better then to be content with what you have and remember God and all his gracious benefits (Psalm 103)! *Godliness with contentment is great gain* (I Timothy 6:6). What great wisdom this is! Look to the Lord and learn to be content. Remember all the good things the Lord has given you. Acknowledge Almighty God as the giver of every good and perfect gift.

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