

JUST ENOUGH

Proverbs 30:7-9

INTRODUCTION

- The children of this world define themselves by their earthly possessions—those who have much are successful, while those who have little are unsuccessful.
- Yet Jesus said, “a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15)
- The term “affluenza” has been created to describe the consumerism that has overwhelmed our society
- How then ought Christians relate to money? Is it a sin to be rich? Is it a virtue to be poor? Is money the root of all evil?
- The Bible contains a great deal of teaching on money
- Jesus taught about money more than any other subject.
- The book of Proverbs has a significant portion dealing with issues of wealth, poverty, greed, income and generosity.
- Proverbs 30 is attributed to Agur the son of Jakeh
- In the opening verses, he shows himself to be a truly humble man, acknowledging his limited knowledge and dependence upon God for all things, including wisdom
- The closer a man draws to God, the lower his view of himself becomes
- Verses 7-9 form a two-fold prayer request in which Agur seeks the Lord's help and provision for his inner life, as well as his outward life.
- There are parallels between this prayer and the Lord's prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)

I. A PRAYER FOR SANCTITY OF SOUL

- A. The soul is the priority
 1. It is the fountainhead of the whole life (Proverbs 4:23)
 2. The soul is more valuable than all the wealth in the world (Mark 8:36)
 3. Godliness profits both in this life and the life to come (1 Timothy 4:8)
 4. Agur here foreshadows the sixth petition of the Lord's prayer: “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:13)

B. Remove vanity

1. Vanity signifies lightness and emptiness
2. It is also used to denote idolatry, falsehood and wickedness generally
3. This corrupt world, its philosophy, things, and course is all vanity (Ecclesiastes 1:2; 1 John 2:15-17)
4. This is a prayer for preservation from setting our affections on the things of this passing world which will only end in disappointment

C. Remove lies

1. Lies come in many forms
 - a. Deception, of others as well as ourselves (Galatians 6:3; James 1:22,26; 1 John 1:8)
 - b. Errors and false doctrine (Ephesians 4:14; 1 Timothy 4:1-2)
 - c. Hypocrisy
2. We are to “put away lying” and “speak every man truth with his neighbour” (Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9)
3. We must have the truth not only on our lips (Proverbs 12:19), but in our inward parts (Psalm 51:6)

II. A PRAYER FOR SUFFICIENCY IN SUBSTANCE

A. Give me “just enough”

1. Neither poverty
 - a. Some are poor because of their own laziness (Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:4; 14:23; 20:13; 24:30-34) or wastefulness (Proverbs 21:17; 23:21)
 - b. Others are poor because of circumstances out of their control (Proverbs 30:14)
2. Nor riches
 - a. “That prayer has lain by till it is almost rusty; ‘Give me not riches,’ is scarce the prayer of one of ten thousand.” (Bunyan)
3. This has been called the “middle station of life”

B. “Feed me with food convenient for me”

1. This means, “the food of my allowance”, or “the bread of my appointed portion”
2. It is what Job called “my necessary food” (Job 23:12)
3. It is the portion of food allocated to a servant each day
4. This accords with the fourth petition of the Lord’s prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11)
5. The children of Israel had to learn to rely upon God for their daily bread in the wilderness (Exodus 16:20)
6. Gluttony is a manifestation of an intemperate heart, of a life lived after the flesh, of one whose god is his belly (Genesis 25:30-34)
7. The Christian can be content with having two things—food and raiment (1 Timothy 6:8)
8. The Lord Jesus exemplified this, whose only earthly possession at his death was his raiment (Luke 23:34)

C. The danger of fullness

1. Wealth often causes men to deny and forget the Lord
 - a. God warned Israel that this would happen to them (Deuteronomy 6:10-12; 8:10-14)
 - b. And they did this very thing (Deuteronomy 32:15; Jeremiah 2:32; Hosea 13:5-6)
2. The rich are inclined to put their trust in “uncertain riches” instead of the God who bestows them (1 Timothy 6:17)
 - a. Riches profit not in the day of wrath (Proverbs 11:4)
 - b. He that trusteth in his riches shall fall (Proverbs 11:28)
 - c. The wealth of the rich fool proved useless to him on the night of his death (Luke 12:15-21)
3. The rich devote their thoughts and worry to their wealth, even to the point of being unable to sleep (Ecclesiastes 5:10-17)
4. Riches are deceitful and choke the word of God (Mark 4:18-19)
5. A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19:23-24)

D. The danger of poverty

1. The poor may resort to theft, violating the eighth commandment (Proverbs 6:30-31)
2. The poor may become embittered against God and curse him (Job 2:9)

CONCLUSION

1. Agur teaches us that for all our needs in life, we must seek God in prayer (Philippians 4:6-7)
2. If we seek and delight ourselves in the Lord, he will give us the desires of our hearts that will be in accordance with his will (Psalm 37:4)
3. Is the prosperity of your soul the primary concern of your life? (3 John 2)
4. We must seek God's help to have a right view of riches
 - ✓ They are a gift from God (Deuteronomy 8:17-18; James 1:17)
 - ✓ They will soon perish (James 1:11; Proverbs 23:4-5)
 - ✓ God gives to us that we may give those things to his service (Proverbs 3:9-10)
 - ✓ Riches in God's sight are not temporal, but spiritual (Proverbs 13:7)
5. Those who seek God first are promised to have their needs met (Matthew 6:33)
6. We need to learn, in whatsoever state we are in, to be content (Philippians 4:11; 1 Timothy 6:6-8; Hebrews 13:5)
7. Is my affection set on things above, or on things on the earth? (Colossians 3:2)

The Shepherd Boy's Song in the Valley of Humiliation
By John Bunyan (1628–1688)

He that is down needs fear no fall,
He that is low, no pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,
Little be it, or much:
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,
Because thou savest such.

Fulness to such a burden is
That go on pilgrimage:
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age.