

JOY IN THE END - 1



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Luke 16: 19-31

Everything has an end - **Prov.23: 18a.**

The end is better or more important than the beginning - **Eccles.7: 8a.**

God Himself who is Alfa & Omega (the Beginning and End) said so.

One major reason why the end is better than the beginning is because we were not there at the beginning but will be there at the end e.g. **Job - Job 38: 4.**

Apart from the end of the year, the ultimate end is when we die (except for raptures saints) - **Heb.9: 27; Mk.8: 36; Deut.32: 29.**

Lazarus and The Rich man both came to the end of their lives but reaped differently (because they sowed differently).

Whereas, Lazarus had joy at the end of his life, the rich man had sorrow and torment.

What do you want at the end of your life - joy or sorrow? Which one will you rather be - Lazarus or the rich man?

Many are now gambling; they want to be the two together but that is not possible.

The Bible is consistent in its teachings that money, riches or wealth has inherent problems and perils both in its acquisition and management - **Ps.37: 16-17; 62: 10b; Prov.15: 16; 16: 8; 23: 4; 30: 7-9; Matt.6: 24; 19: 24; 1Tim.6: 6-10.**

The Problem With Money:

1. Money is one thing God never created and that is not in heaven - **Matt.22: 17-21.**
2. Money mimics God and competes for worship with Him - **Eccles.10: 19; Matt.6: 24.**
3. Money excites and makes us frivolous but God wants us to be sober - **Ps.62: 10; 1Pet.5: 8.**
4. The rich usually oppress the poor - **Jam.2: 6-7.** 'Behind great wealth is great filth'
5. Money instigates pride and arrogance - **Prov.18: 11; 1Tim.6: 17.**
6. Love of money corrupts and is the root of all evil - **1Tim.6: 8-10.**
7. God forbids kings, priests and disciples of Christ from amassing wealth -

Take note and get it clear that 'Prosperity' is the promise of the Old Testament, but 'Tribulation' or 'Persecution' is the promise of the New Testament - **Jn.16: 33; 2Tim.3: 12.**

However, we cannot generalize that all rich men are sinners or wicked or that all poor men are good or Godly. Some Christians are poor because they are lazy - **Prov.10: 4; 19: 15; 20: 4; 2Thess.3: 10; 1Pet.4: 15-16.**

Rich Christians are also enjoined to lay up their wealth or treasures in heaven by giving to charity - **Matt.6: 19-21; Gal.2: 10; 1Jn.3: 16-17.**

Ungodly Ways To Acquire Money:

1. Stealing and Fraud e.g. Jacob & The Unjust Servant, not paying tithes - **Mal.3: 8-12; Eph.4: 28.**
2. Armed Robbery, Kidnapping, Banditry Murder and Rituals e.g. Jezebel & Nabboth's Vineyard (1Kg.21), Man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho (**Lk.10: 30**).
3. Lying and Cheating (God or man), Bribery & Corruption - **Prov.11:1.**
4. Unequal Yoke and anything out of the will of God - **Isa.31: 1; 2Cor.6: 14-18.**

Examples - Abraham & King of Sodom (**Gen.14: 21-24**), King Amaziah of Judah & the King of Israel (2Chron.25), Jonah at Sea, etc.

5. Illicit Trades and Unethical Investments e.g. Bribery & Corruption, Fake Products, Alcohol, Cigarettes, Hard Drugs, Guns & Weapons of War, Gambling, Prostitution, Human Trafficking, Baby Factory, etc. - **Lev.19: 29; Prov.20: 1.**

The poverty and suffering of many believers therefore stem out of the fact that they have very little or narrow income base - **Jn.16: 33b.**

So, believers in Christ are generally called to a life of contentment and endurance - **1Tim.6: 6-8; 2Tim.2: 3.**

However, there is light at the end of the tunnel; the suffering of such believers has an end and will not last forever - **Matt.10: 22; 1Cor.15: 19.**

The end is far better than the beginning - **Eccles.7: 8; Deut.32: 29.**

Conclusion:

Whereas, wicked rich men may enjoy the best things in their life time, great torment awaits them when they die - **Matt.22: 13.**

However, believers with godliness and contentment who endure hardship to the end of their life will be rewarded with joy and be comforted eventually in heaven

We must prepare to endure the mockery of ungodly people also and never be lured to go their wicked ways - **Ps.73: 1-3; Heb.11: 36.** E.g. Hannah & Penninah.

We must not focus too much on our present travails but look beyond now to the future - Our joy comes in the morning or in the end - **Ps. 30: 5b; 126: 5-6.**