

Ecclesiastes: The Duty of Man – Lesson 1
“The Pursuit for Wealth”
Ecclesiastes 5:10-6:9 (Ecc 5:12-16)
By Russell Earl

Thesis: I want to show the error in a person's life that is centered on the "Pursuit of Wealth".

Intro: The Idea & Definition of Wealth

- A. Wealth is viewed differently by different people.
 - 1. Wealth to some refers to a big pay check. Wealth to others refers to a mansion, a nice car(s), yachts, planes or multiple homes.
- B. Definition of Wealth
 - 1. Vines defines wealth as having "plenty".
 - 2. Today, is mankind (as a whole) satisfied even when it has "plenty"?

I. Quest for Wealth (**Pro 23:4-5**)

- A. Wealth (riches) cannot satisfy (**5:10-12, Pro 11:4**)
 - 1. The same problem can be seen in any culture.
 - One who devotes his life to gathering riches is called a "lover" of them. Here "silver" is a name for money or wealth.
 - The more one has, the more one craves (**v.10**).
 - 2. The more wealth (riches) a man possesses, greater are the strains on him (**v.11**). He increases his household, his goods, automobiles etc. thus, he rarely is better off. Famous men have written books about gaining wealth and NOT wasting the money on material things. Ecclesiastes tells us the same thing.
 - 3. Great wealth can also rob a person of sleep (**v.12**).
 - Such a person earns and enjoys his night's rest. The care and anxieties which wealth can bring can and often does rob a person of sleep. – Some work all their lives to keep up on the same level of living as others.
- B. Wealth (riches) can be harmful (**5:13-17**)
 - 1. The person who strives or lives his life to become wealthy thinks it's good; the Bible says otherwise. Wealth (riches) are kept by the owner "to his hurt" (**v.13**).
 - 2. Wealth (riches) has often perished through hardship or misfortune. The perished wealth never makes it to the hands of his son. Thus the purpose of living life for wealth is a life misspent. Better never to have had wealth, than once having had it to lose it, because the loss of it brings a lot of distress and disappointment (**v.14-15**).
 - 3. Riches are not a permanent possession. For one reason; all rich people eventually die and leave their wealth behind (**Ecc 2:18b**).
- C. Riches can be enjoyed (**5:18-20, Pro 15:16**)
 - 1. We are encouraged to enjoy the things God has blessed us with in this life (**v.18**).
 - We are encouraged to enjoy the fruits of our labor. However we shouldn't try to squeeze out more than what labors can deliver. One should be content (**1 Tim 6:6-8**).
 - 2. The Bible tells us that not only the riches we have are from God but, the ability to enjoy those riches also comes from God. The ability to be satisfied and enjoy wealth and not filling our lives with only the desire to gain more. The ability to enjoy your riches is indeed a gift of God. Faithful Christians are given this gift as a characteristic

of a Christian – followers of Christ do not seek great riches but only to enjoy those that they have been blessed with (v.19-20).

II. Wealth & Happiness (6:1-2,7-8)

A. A rich man with no enjoyment (6:2a)

1. God at times gives men all their desires but their trials come when they are not able to enjoy them.
2. This man has all that he needs yet is still unsatisfied (**Pro 27:20**). The world chokes at any desire to follow God (**Mt 13:22**).

B. A rich man without an heir (6:2b)

1. Before this rich man (6:2a) is able to learn how to enjoy wealth. A “foreigner” takes it away. This may not be a person but an event (job loss, death, injury, etc).
2. This condition (wealth without the ability to enjoy it) is “vanity and an evil affliction”.

C. Wealth & Man’s Desire (6:7-8, Ps 37:16)

1. Many are always striving after enjoyment through materialism yet never gain Satisfaction (v.7).
2. (v.8) – Who knows how to walk before the living(the world)? The “wise man, the poor man” or the “fool”? Only the one who realizes the truth of searching and finding (**Matt 10:39**).

D. Wealth & the Bible (Acts 5:1-5,7,9)

1. The Bible clearly warns us about the dangers of wealth. We must notice its not money or wealth that brings sin but it’s the “love of money” or the love of wealthy & worldly possessions (**1 Tim 6:10**).
2. Despite what the others say or do; the church building is not a place for fundraising or making money. It is a place where the saints come to worship & praise God (**John 2:13-16**)! We may not be selling doves but a coffeehouse or restaurant is not any different.
3. Those who rob God will answer for their deceitful ways (**Mal 3:8, Acts 5:1-5,7,9**)
- Those here who rob God failed to see Him for who He is (**Heb 4:13**). We must not withhold from God the things he has blessed us with – because they came from God (**James 1:17, Heb 13:5**)!

- Conc:
1. We should work to live and not live to work. We work so that we can live and have the things we need to live, not live to work for all the things we want.
 2. **1 Tim 6:9-11a**
 3. Full Invitation