

I. INTRODUCTION

Is it good or bad to be rich? People have wrestled with this question since time immemorial. Let us learn today from someone who may have been one of the richest and wisest of all men- Solomon.

II. BIBLE READING

Ecclesiastes 5:10 Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. 11 As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them? 12 The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep. 13 I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner, 14 or wealth lost through some misfortune, so that when he has a son there is nothing left for him. 15 Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand. 16 This too is a grievous evil: As a man comes, so he departs, and what does he gain, since he toils for the wind? 17 All his days he eats in darkness, with great frustration, affliction and anger. 18 Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him- for this is his lot. 19 Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work- this is a gift of God. 20 He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart. (NIV)

III. DISCUSSION

A. The Wrong Approach To Riches (vv. 10-17)

1. What is the attitude towards money that we should beware of? (v.10) Cite examples to illustrate that “those who love money are those whose money is never enough.”
2. Why do people love money?
3. V. 11 notes another aspect of increasing wealth. It can be paraphrased as “The more you earn, the more you tend to spend”. Cite examples from our life to illustrate this.
4. V. 12 speaks about getting a good night’s sleep—that is, peace of mind. What are the worries of a rich man? Is it possible to be a rich man and yet get a good night’s sleep? How?
5. Vv. 13-17. What is the main idea in this section? Since we cannot take anything with us when we die, why do people strive so hard to gain riches? What are the negative effects on us when we strive so hard to gain riches? (v. 17) Cite some examples from our lives to show it.
6. REFLECTION: How important is it for me that I become rich? Do I worry about money matters?

B. The Right Approach To Riches (vv. 18-20)

1. What is the main thought in this section?
2. Contrast a person who has this approach to money with a person who loves money (as in vv. 10-17). Let us see how this difference in approach affects both. How does it affect a person’s ability to enjoy what he has? (vv. 11, 17-19) Give examples of proper ways to enjoy wealth. When does enjoying wealth become improper? Give examples. How does it affect a person’s ability to have a peace of mind? (vv. 12, 17, 19). How does it affect a person’s attitude towards God? (vv. 19,20)
3. Aside from the differences mentioned in the passage, let us see what other effects there are on people who have those

two different approaches to wealth. How does it affect a person's use of money? Cite references from the Bible to support the statement that we should share our wealth with the needy.

4. But if we consider wealth as gift of God and are contented with what we have, will it not cause us to stagnate and not progress? Why? Share your experiences on this.
5. REFLECTION: Do I really look at wealth and possessions as a gifts from God?

IV. CONCLUSION

Being rich in itself is neither good or bad. It is our attitude towards it that makes all the difference. May we learn to enjoy it as a gift from God, and be filled with gratefulness and thanks.