THE ALLURE OF RICHES
(Luke 8:11-15)

I. Prosperity can be a hindrance.
   a. The word “prosperity” is found 17 times in the Bible, all in the Old Testament.
      i. Times of prosperity can result in the temptation to move away from God.
      ii. David said that he would not allow his time of prosperity to take him away from God.
   c. Proverbs 1:32.
      i. A foolish person lets money destroy his life.
      ii. Think of the stories of people who came into sudden wealth.
      iii. Many of them lost their wealth almost as suddenly as they obtained it.
      iv. The old adage is “a fool and his money are soon parted”.
      i. God is offering a rich person salvation and spiritual blessings but there is no interest on the part of the rich person.
      ii. 1 Corinthians 1:26 – look around and we can see that not many mighty or noble have answered the gospel call.
   e. These three examples show us that prosperity can be hindrance to having or keeping a good relationship with God.

II. Our possessions can possess us.
   a. On one occasion, a young man came up to Jesus asking the greatest question he could ask.
      i. He wanted to know what he needed to do to have eternal life.
      ii. In essence, he was asking what he must do to be saved.
      iv. Notice that he went away sorrowful because, though he had great possessions, his possessions had him.
   b. Riches can be deceitful, giving a false sense of security, and they are uncertain (1 Timothy 6:17).
   c. Moses had warned the Israelites what would happen after they came into possession of the promised land (Deuteronomy 8:10-20).
      i. Notice that these warnings point to the enjoying of prosperity.
      ii. As slaves in Egypt, they had never had to deal with this.
      iii. The book of Judges points out how they handled prosperity.
   d. The parable of the rich fool exemplifies the wrong attitude toward riches (Luke 12:13-21).
      i. This farmer must have been a good one.
      ii. No doubt, those of the world viewed him as being very successful.
iii. He made up his mind to keep his wealth to himself and tore down his barns to build bigger ones.

iv. Things didn’t work out the way he had planned though.

v. God called him a fool because he didn’t make plans for the next life, only focusing on this one.

vi. He failed to use the riches with which he had been blessed by God as a tool for spiritual growth.

e. Jesus is the perfect example of the right attitude toward riches.

i. Jesus didn’t care about things like that.

ii. It has been observed that we never read of Jesus saying, my house, my money, my farm, my books, my business.

iii. He did speak of my Father, my brethren, my friends, my disciples, my church, my name, my sheep, my peace, my words, and my joy.

iv. Jesus thought more of spiritual possessions than he did material ones.

III. Our riches can make us poor.

a. We considered the life of Lot a few Sunday nights ago.

b. He made his decisions based on what was best for his pocketbook.

c. Notice the progression of what became his poverty.

i. Having many flocks and herds he pitched his tent toward Sodom because it was the best pastur-eland for his animals (Genesis 13:12).

ii. He then moved into Sodom, despite its apparently well-known wickedness (Genesis 14:12).

iii. He is then seen as sitting in the gate as one of the leaders of the city (Genesis 19:1).

iv. Lot became one of the Sodomites, referring to them as my brethren (Genesis 19:7).

v. Sodom entered into Lot’s home.

1. Lot had two daughters in his home, but had daughters that were married because his sons-in-law laughed at him.

2. The angels mentioned sons, so it may be he had sons in Sodom as well as sons-in-law.

3. Lot lost his wealth, but even worse, he lost most of his family.

d. How tragic is the story of Lot!

e. Too many sacrifice their children to this world through their negligence and then wonder why their children grow up and leave the Lord and His church.

f. Think of all the things people have done to get money.

i. Lied, cheated, stolen, and killed.

ii. Risked their lives in heat, cold, and dangerous conditions.

iii. Yet not one of them has taken any of it from this life to the next.

iv. Many have instead, lost their souls to the pursuit of it.

g. There is nothing inherently sinful about having wealth.
i. If you live in America, you are more than likely in the top 10% of the world’s wealthiest people.

ii. Several of God’s great servants were people of wealth.

iii. The problem is not with having possessions, but allowing them to be that for which we hunger and thirst and not God’s righteousness.

iv. The problem is with making it, and not going to heaven, the aim of our lives.

v. It is the desire to be rich that is leads to evil, not riches themselves.

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