

Series: Pathway Through the Psalms

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

PSALMS 49

Text: Psalms 49:17

Psalm 49:17

¹⁷ For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

Introduction:

The greatest fool is the person who lives for the pursuit of riches in this world, only to lose his soul for eternity.

The rich may appear content, but their prosperity is only temporary.

Death is an appointment that everyone has on the schedule and the grave is the great equalizer.

Departure from this world will remove all of our possessions.

So why would one live for what they cannot keep?

The greatest treasure of all is to possess what lasts forever and truly satisfies – eternal life.

This is the theme of this psalm, serving as a warning to all who place their trust in their riches.

Note:

1. THE PSALMIST'S CALL (VS. 1-4)

A. The Audience Mentioned (vs. 1-2)

Psalm 49:1-2

¹ Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: ² Both low and high, rich and poor, together.

In these verses the psalmist addresses every person from every walk of life.

- All People – “all ye people”
- All Places – “both high and low”
- All Positions – “rich and poor”

This message is for everyone.

We consider the Psalmist's Call which brought:

2. THE PSALMIST'S COUNSEL (VS. 5-15)

Note the counsel we read:

A. Counsel Regarding Flawed Trust (vs. 6)

Psalm 49:6

⁶ They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

There are some who believe they can gain access to Heaven or avoid death through the abundance of their possessions.

Illustration: (Luke 12:16-21)

Luke 12:16-21

¹⁶ And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

¹⁷ And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

¹⁸ And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. ²⁰ But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? ²¹ So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Remember the wealth of this world is temporary.

Note not only the Counsel Regarding the Flawed Trust but also:

B. The Counsel Regarding Foolish Thought (vs. 7-9)

Psalm 49:7-8

⁷ None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: ⁸ (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)

Wealth offers no redemption to the soul.

Those who trust in riches cannot buy salvation for themselves or their family.

C. Counsel Regarding Forgetfulness of Time

Psalm 49:10-12

¹⁰ For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. ¹¹ Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. ¹² Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.

As time passes so does the memory of those departed.

D. The Counsel Regarding the Folly of the Tomb

Psalm 49:13-15

¹³ This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah. ¹⁴ Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. ¹⁵ But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

Wealth can't prevent the eventual end of their life.

We consider the Psalmist's Call which brought the Psalmists Counsel which lead to:

3. THE PSALMIST'S CAUTION (VS. 16-20)

In the closing verses of this psalm the psalmist offers words of caution.

Note:

A. The Caution of Envy (vs. 16-19)

Psalm 49:16-19

¹⁶ Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; ¹⁷ For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him. ¹⁸ Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself. ¹⁹ He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

Because the wicked will perish in spite of their wealth (vss. 6-14), the godly must not let the prosperity of the rich captivate their heart.

We should be awed when a man gets rich, for the rich will never take any of his riches with him.

Ecclesiastes 5:15

¹⁵ As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.

Why should one envy the temporal trappings of a meaningless life?

Not only does the Psalmist caution of Envy but also note:

B. The Caution of Eternity (vs. 20)

Psalm 49:20

²⁰ Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.

This psalm or song ends with the refrain, “*Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.*”

Understanding the differences between men from animals, if these individuals will not follow the highest wisdom, like beasts find their all in this life, then their end shall be as mean and dishonorable as that of beasts slain in the hunt, except their destination will be in the flames of Hell for eternity.

Matthew 25:46

⁴⁶ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Close:

As I close what is it and where is it that we are laying up treasure?

Remember:

Proverbs 15:16

¹⁶ Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

The things we gather in this life will be left behind; only those treasures in Heaven will last.

Matthew 6:19-20

¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

When we think of riches; the riches that matter are the Unsearchable Riches (pg. 495 Great Hymns of Faith)

Verse 1

Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ,
Wealth that can never be told!
Riches exhaustless of mercy and grace,
Precious, more precious than gold!

Verse 2

Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ!
Who shall their greatness declare?
Jewels whose luster our lives may adorn,
Pearls that the poorest may wear!

Verse 3

Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ!
Freely, how freely they flow,
Making the souls of the faithful and true
Happy wherever they go!

Verse 4

Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ!
Who would not gladly endure
Trials, afflictions, and crosses on earth,
Riches like these to secure!

Chorus

Precious, more precious,
Wealth that can never be told!
Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ!
Precious, more precious than gold.