

FAITH IS ACTION

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THE THREE FOOLISH LOVERS

*"Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land,
that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a
perfect way, he shall serve me."*

Psalm 101:6



THE THREE FOOLISH LOVERS

By R.G. Hardy

In the beginning, God looked down through the human ages and saw you and me. He saw just the way our lives would go and what our station in life would be, and He gathered everything we would ever need and reserved it for us. When the time comes when we have a need, He promised: *“But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus”* (Phil. 4:19).

There are basically three economic groups of people in the world, and you and I will fit into one of the three:

1. The Poor: This group hardly has enough of the daily essentials to have their needs supplied. Jesus said that the poor will always be with us. Judas told Mary, when she was anointing Jesus’ feet, “Don’t break that expensive box of oil and pour it on Jesus. Give it to me, and I’ll sell and give it to the poor.” He really wanted to put the money in his pocket, because he was a thief. The Lord said, *“The poor always ye have with you, but me ye have not always”* (John 12:8).

2. The Rich: They are the other extreme, who have more than they need for their daily essentials. They live luxuriously and without financial restraint.

3. The Sufficient: The third group is in the middle. They have all the essentials they need to live a healthy, victorious life, without bondage or greed.

Everyone falls into one of these. Of course, many would like to be in the *rich group* that has more than they need, but we will see the unhappy end of most of these people. I’m sure that none of us want to be in the first group—*the poor!* We will see that God’s plan is for us to be in the middle group—*the sufficient.*

Sufficient In All things

“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:” (2 Cor. 9:8).

I like this verse—It’s beautiful, because it begins: *“And God is able...”* God can do it. I don’t care what your need is; I don’t care what your situation is; I don’t care if you are in the poor group—God is able! Then since you are one of His children, you can say, “God is going to make *me* able.” *“God is able”* to do five things to make you able, and *five* is the number of *grace*: All grace to abound unto you, **always,**

having **all** sufficiency in **all** things, may abound unto **every**—or **all** good work!

If the truth were told, some of the most miserable people in the world are millionaires and billionaires, and the Scriptures we will now examine are for us more than any other day in history, because men have become more covetous and self-indulgent. Paul categorized the sins that would identify the last days, which he prophesied would be “*perilous times*” in **2 Timothy 3: 1-5**. I’m going to be preaching from this text on *three foolish lovers*.

Paul began with this serious instruction: “*This know also...*” God wants us to know this, so we can avoid the pitfalls that will ensnare many in these last days. “*...that in the last days perilous times shall come.*”

“*For men shall be lovers of their own selves...*” This is the *first foolish lover*, and the second is referred to in the next word which is translated *covetous* in the King James version: “*For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous...*” The Greek is literally translated “*lovers of silver.*” In the Bible days, they didn’t have paper money, but only coins, so it’s accurately translated “*lovers of money.*” They are *in peril*, and the word *peril* means *jeopardy* and *danger*.

Those that love themselves and those that love money are in danger, because Paul put these foolish lovers in the same class as “*boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good. Traitors, heady, high-minded. Lovers of pleasures, more than lovers of God*” (vv. 2-4).

This is the third foolish lover: “*lovers*

of pleasures,” and the Greek actually says “*rather than lovers of God!*” The implication is when pleasures become one’s love, the love for God is squeezed out and replaced.

The Three Foolish Lovers

These three foolish lovers appear to flow from one to another in stages: First of all, the *lovers of their own selves* are focused on self-gratification. All they think about is *me, myself and I*. Therefore, they become *lovers of money* in order to get the things they think will satisfy the lusts and desires of the natural man. They must have more “*silver,*” and their whole lives are concerned with getting money.

If you want to be rich, then you’re going to have to deal with the rich people, and often their ways are unscrupulous. Many will do anything to get riches, and you must deal on their terms. They want to satisfy their own selfish lusts that can’t be satisfied. You take somebody who loves food, and the more they eat, the more they want. My brother told me about this young man, and he said that he is the hugest person that he has ever seen. All he does is eat and eat and eat. Somebody told him, “You know, you are killing yourself.” He said, “I don’t care. I love it.”

You can never satisfy your fleshly lust, and when people love money, they have to get the money, and they don’t care who they knock down, who they flimflam to get it. The poorest people in our cities are in the ghettos. Who do the drug peddlers go after? They go after those poor people, and they don’t care if they make them addicts. In fact, they want them to become addicts, so they give them a little bit to whet their thirst for drugs, because they want the drug

money. They want the gold hanging around their necks. They want limousines and the fancy clothes, and all of that proud, arrogant, heady, high-minded, style of life.

Unscrupulous business people prey on the poor. Some in our city of Baltimore had a big scheme buying abandoned houses cheap. Then they turned around and sold them to the poor, charging outrageous prices. They call this “flipping.” Of course, they get the money so they can satisfy their want for pleasures. We are living in a pleasure-crazed day, and the third stage is the “*lovers of pleasures.*”

Pleasures can never satisfy the flesh, because the flesh can't be satisfied, but many people spend their lives trying to get money to satisfy their flesh. If some would hit the jackpot or the lottery for a million dollars, they would go crazy with the money. First, they would run out and get all the fancy clothes, the big house, the fancy car. They might take a trip here and there, but they wouldn't know what to do with all that money, and their souls would still be empty. *Because you can never satisfy the immortal soul with mortal things!*

It would be like that fairy tale about King Midas. He said, “I want the gift that everything I touch will turn to gold.” He thought that was the greatest of all gifts, and when he got his wish, he went around turning everything into gold. But one day he went to hug his precious daughter, and she turned into a statue of gold. The Midas touch was a curse!

I believe God has put us in the station in life that He wants us to be in, and has given us the ability to be able to produce that which is sufficient for us to meet our needs. To me, money is not a lust; it's a tool to lift up the

Lord and get the Gospel out. If I didn't need the money to get the Gospel out, I wouldn't care about money. I don't want to have money just so that I can put it into the bank and say that I have a million dollars. What good is that? An old Jewish proverb that says, “*God, don't give me poverty lest I curse You.*” Then it says, “*Don't give me riches lest I forget You, but give me what is sufficient for me—my daily bread*” (Prov. 30:8-9).

Too often the rich forget God. They have a million dollars in the bank, and all that goes with being rich. They don't need anything materially. They have it made. Why do they need God? They don't have to depend on God for their bread. The only time that they are going to need God is when they get cancer, or if they would live a healthy life and die healthy, they would need God to be their Savior. Money can't save you, brother. The Bible says that you can make it in the world, but when you leave, you can't take it with you. You leave the same way you came into the world: “*Naked I came out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither...*” (Job 1:21).

Solomon said, “*As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labor in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath labored for the wind?*” (Ecc. 5:15-16).

When you leave this world, the only thing that will last out of this life is what you've done for Christ. All the rest is going to be burned up. You either have works that are eternal like silver, gold and precious stones, or else they are going to be wood, stubble and hay, and God's going to put

the fire to it. Only what's done for Jesus is going to last (**Ref: 1 Cor. 3:12-15**).

I've been saying this all my life since God revealed to me what being rich really means: *Having what you need when you need it!* Better is the poor man with a little bit with God, than a rich man with much without God. Those who find themselves poor in this life will often be "used" by the rich, oppressed by the rich, and God hates this. If you are blessed financially, then you need to give to the poor. The Bible says, "*When you give to the poor, you are lending to the Lord, and He's going to pay you back*" (Prov. 19:17).

Every time we send money over to the orphanage in Isiome, Kenya, and the work there grows, we are blessed here. We now have a satellite orphanage with over 200 homeless children. Every time we give to these, God blesses the ministry here. God always touches somebody to support the work, because in the beginning, He knew that He was going to call me to this ministry. He knew that He was going to give me this work, and He put everything I need right there in Heaven so that when I need it, God dispenses it.

Paul stated that these who are lovers of self, money, and pleasures "have a form of godliness." They claim to be Christians, but they are "*covetous, boasters of what they have, proud, blasphemers, disobedience to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affections* (this also covers homosexuality), *no love for their families, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent* (without self control), *fierce, despisers of those that are good...*" (Because they bring conviction on them, and they don't want to be convicted.)

"...*Traitors...*" (They will turn on you, because self is number one: Don't you touch my money, honey! Don't deny me my pleasures!) *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*"

These people who go down "the money road" are in trouble, and Paul warned, "Turn away from the self-lovers; turn away from those who want pleasures." The churches that are having the biggest crowds today are the ones who are geared to pleasure. Who needs an altar call? That is no pleasure, to kneel down. Who needs an altar, because if I preach righteousness, no one will come! Everybody is talking about how you can get rich, and the ones getting rich are the ones telling you about it, because you are buying all their books, recordings, and giving them \$100 pledges to get it. Who are you giving to, the man or the Lord? The Lord says if you give it to Me, then it's going to be given to you in the same measure or ratio that you gave to Me: "*Give, and it shall be given you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give it into your bosom*" (Lk. 6:38).

I have been preaching for over 50 years, and according to the norm of most preachers who have been preaching deliverance as long as I have, I should have millions of dollars, a Rolls Royce, a summer palace, a winter palace! I like it the way God has it, to live by faith, because it keeps me praying every day. I don't forget Him, because I need Him everyday. I have to pray every day, "*Give us this day our daily bread...*" You know you can't say the Lord's Prayer with "me" or "my" or "you." You have to pray it in the plural, "Give **us** this day **our**

daily bread.” If you are a “lover of self,” all your praying is for me: “Bless me, my two, we three, my four, and no more.”

Paul said these covetous lovers are denying the power of God, I would rather have the power of God in my life than a million dollars in the bank! Because if I have the power of God in my life, the power of God will anoint my faith. Then when I ask God, He’s going to hear me, and supply all of my needs financially, materially, physically, and spiritually, no matter how great they are!

Now the unfortunate people who are born in poverty are doomed without God to change their situation, especially overseas. The poorest nation in the western hemisphere is *Haiti*. That was the first nation God let me go to over 30 years ago, and when I saw their poverty, I literally got mad at God. I went to the Lord in anger, and said, “Lord, in this twentieth century, how could You allow this situation? When Americans throw more away in the garbage cans, than these people will ever get to eat?”

They had what they called a “poor man’s market” between the rich man’s market and the market where tourists go. This area is packed wall-to-wall like sardines with poor people who were born there and some die in that very spot. All they live to do is to beg something from the tourists. The guide who took us through said, “Now, they are going to crowd you, but don’t give anybody any money.” I can still see that one little woman with sad eyes looking at me. She was looking into my soul, and she followed us. Every time I looked around, I saw her eyes piercing me. I told the brother, “I don’t care what you told me not to do, I’m going to give that woman some money,

or I’ll never sleep again.”

But you see, money was not the answer to their problem. So when I got mad at the Lord, He said to me, “The reason they are in that condition is because they have rejected My Son and went to voo doo worship.” Whenever you go after demons, that is what the demons will do. Haiti was dedicated to the devil 200 years ago, and as a result, it is an island of filth, hunger, and hopelessness. It shares one-half of a large island with the *Dominican Republic*. The fact is, the *Dominican Republic*, which is a Christian nation, is a virtual paradise, while its next-door neighbor, *Haiti*, the voo doo capital of the world, is an impoverished nation.

Later, when we traveled to the top of the mountain where one of the missionaries lived, we saw people marching up the mountain. I asked, “What are they doing?” He said, “They are going up the mountain to pray and fast.” Many had our *Faith Is Action* magazines under their arms, and their faces were shining. God was supplying their needs, because when you go to these places that are so poor, wherever there are Christians, you will find that God supplies their needs in the midst of that poor environment. You can’t expect to be blessed when you don’t have God, because the devil is out to destroy you. Jesus said, “*The thief cometh not but to steal, and to kill and to destroy, but I am come that you might have life, and have it more abundantly*” (John 10:10). The poor are going to stay poor until they get a hold of God. Then God will bring them into that middle group where their needs are always supplied when they need it.

When you have God, He will make you rich in your pocket by giving you what you

need. He'll make you rich in your body, because "by His stripes you are healed." He will satisfy your mouth with good things so that your youth is renewed like an eagle. (Ref. Psalm 103:1-5). To be rich is to be an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus, to be full of the Holy Ghost and have the joy of the Spirit that is unspeakable and full of glory, and to have your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life, having an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled reserved in Heaven. That is being rich! Paul said that he had nothing but Jesus, but yet he possessed all things. He was rich because he could sing in the Philippi jail house. He could sing as he was walking down the corridor to get his head cut off: *"I have fought a good fight. I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me, that the Lord shall give me in that day, and not only to me, but to all of them who love His appearing"* (2 Tim. 4:7-8). He went out rich. He went out victorious. He went out an overcomer.

Gain Is Not Godliness

In Luke 16, Jesus told the account of the rich man who died and woke up in Hell, being in the flames of fire. He was so rich, but the spirit of greed had him so much, that he wouldn't even give Lazarus the beggar a meal. The servants had to come out and shake the table cloth, so that he could eat the crumbs. The dogs had more mercy on him, because they licked his wounds. When Lazarus died, he was carried by angels into Paradise, where he was in *comfort*, but the rich man was in hell in *torments* (plural), because he was not rich toward God and others. He realized it then, but it was too late!

In his letter to Timothy, Paul revealed that men's minds can become corrupt to the point that they are, *"Supposing that gain is godliness..."* (1 Tim. 6:5). Some people register your faith by how much money you have. Some preachers and pastors of all these modern mega churches only want to know: "How many people have you got? How big is your congregation? Why, we have to expand our church!" They don't tell you how many souls have been saved, or how much the power of God is moving in their midst. *"Supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."* Paul commanded.

Verse 6: *"But godliness with contentment is great gain."* The Greek word is *"with sufficiency."* Godliness with sufficiency (which means having your need supplied) is great gain. I don't want riches without God. If I have God, I have what I need. Having your need supplied is great gain, and you are rich, but you don't have any of the burdens and problems with the excess of filthy lucre. You won't fall into the temptation and snares of the devil!

Verse 7: *"But we brought nothing into this world, and it's certain that we will take nothing out."* (Only what we've done for Christ.) *And having food and raiment let us therewith be content."* The Greek word for raiment means "covering;" it means not only one's clothes but also his house; in other words, the necessities of life. If you have the necessities of life, you should be content. We need some things that they didn't need in Paul's day, such as an automobile, but it doesn't have to be a Rolls Royce! It just has to be something that is dependable. Be content, because the devil is always trying to get you to keep up with the Joneses, trying

to outdo others. Having food and covering, clothes, and a roof over your head, the necessities of life, therewith be content!

Verse 9: *“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.”* Do you want your life to be one temptation after another? If not, then you don’t want riches. When you have enough money to make your bills, and the normal things without any pressure, you’re blessed, and you are not tempted to buy lustful things that will become idol gods.

“But they that will be rich will fall into temptations and a snare.” You can open a door with riches for the devil to tempt you to do things you would never have done or thought about. It can become a snare like an animal caught in a trap. He’s trapped you, and it’s not a blessing. A Bible illustration of somebody who loved riches to their own destruction is found in Acts 5 when the church first began. All the people gave what they had and put it in a general pool, and it was dispersed to people who had need. Ananias and Sapphira loved money, but they wanted to have the pretense that they were doing right. They put some into their pockets. When Ananias came in, Peter said, “Did you give me all the money?” Ananias said, “Yes.” Peter said, “You’re lying,” and he fell down dead. Then Sapphira came in, and Peter said, “Is it true that you and your husband gave all the money?” She said, “Yes,” and Peter said, “The feet of the ones who buried your husband are coming in now to bury you,” and she fell down dead.

Look what happened to Judas. He was picked to be a disciple of the Lord, chosen to such a high office, chosen to have the

power of God and to do miracles. He was saved, because nobody can cast out devils unless they are saved. Somebody said that he was the devil incarnated. If that were true, why did the devil kill himself? Why was he sorry and threw the money back? He was deceived, but he wasn’t the devil. And what got him? It was the 30 pieces of silver. Jesus had shown him how much faith He had in him when He made him treasurer over the money, but temptation got him. He had to have that money. He figured he knew how to do it. The devil said, “All you have to do is betray Him, and Jesus will do a miracle act. He’ll become invisible and get out.” But it didn’t happen, and Judas was stunned. He thought Jesus was going to get out, and Judas went to the conspirators and said, “Here’s your money.” He threw it back at them and said, “I’ve betrayed innocent blood.” They said, “You did it. See to it yourself.” Then he went out and hung himself.

Perhaps, in the beginning when you are first called to ministry, you didn’t know much. God picked you up, filled you with the Holy Ghost and began to give you the power of God. You became an instrument in His hands to do signs, wonders and miracles. All of a sudden, people started praising you, and your head got big. Then you go after money, and you forgot that it’s God who is doing it. You are like Samson, and you think it’s you until you lose your consecration and your dedication. Then what happens? You get your eyes put out, and the devil makes you a beast of burden, a slave to your own carnal appetites. Samson woke up, because when he could see, he couldn’t see. He was blind, but when he became

physically blind, he could see spiritually. He said to the Lord, “One more time let Your Spirit come on me. One more time let the power come on me. Get all the devils in one place and let Your Spirit come on me one more time. Let me die with the enemy.

The devil has snares, and when money has you, you are blinded and you can't see it. You can't hear God. You are trusting in the money. Some are so encumbered with money and their pleasures that they don't need God. They don't need to pray. They have everything they want, and they don't need Him. They have the best insurance plans. They can get the best doctors. What do they need God for? Remember when that rich young ruler came to Jesus, he said, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus quoted the law except one, because that's the one that he was guilty of: “*Thou shalt not covet.*” Paul also thought that he was perfect to the law until God convicted him on “*Thou shalt not covet*” (Rom. 7:7). Then he found out that he was a sinner.

The Lord loved that young man, because he didn't murder, kill, lie, steal, commit adultery, but He said, “*You lack one thing. If you want to be perfect, sell what you have and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven, and come, take up the cross and follow Me.*” And he went away grieved, because he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!*” (Mark 10: 17-24).

Another time Jesus spoke a parable about a rich man who had a bumper crop one year: “*And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 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. 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. 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? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God*” (Luke 12:17-21).

This is why Paul warned about “*many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.*” The Greek *perdition* can be likened unto one who falls into the river, and an alligator comes and grabs him and pulls him down into a death twirl. When an alligator gets his prey, he spins him in the death twirl and takes him to the bottom. That's what happens to those who are lovers of riches and lusts. The devil traps them and grabs them like an alligator, and pulls them down into the death throes, and they are destroyed.

The Root of All Evil

Verse 10: “*For the love of money is the root of all evil...*” If the money wasn't behind it, there would be no drug trade, there would be no prostitutes, there would be no gang drive-by killings for their turf. Our cities would be safe enough to live in any area. There wouldn't be any miscarriage of justice if leaders didn't love money.

“*For the love of money is the root of all*

evil: which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith..." (The faith here refers to the teachings of God.) "...and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Don't blame the devil. Paul said that they pierced themselves through with many sorrows. Do you want sorrows? Then go after money.

"But thou, O man of God, flee these things..." (Run from that easy way to get riches!) "...and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life where unto thou was also called..." (vv. 11-12). The verse before states that they have "erred from the faith," and you can't fight the good fight of faith when you have erred from it!

All Is Vanity!

The richest person that ever lived was Solomon. (Even Bill Gates, who owns Microsoft, doesn't have as much as he had. Thank God, he has enough sense to give to the poor.) The book of *Ecclesiastes*, which means *preacher*, was written by Solomon, who had wisdom above anybody that has ever lived, except for Jesus. Solomon in his wisdom searched out the pleasures of the things that man did on the face of the earth. In Ecc. 2:1-3, he said,

"I said in mine heart, Go to now (or listen to this), I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasures: and behold, this also was vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it? I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which

they should do under the heaven all the days of their life."

Now consider what he had, and what the man who was the epitome of riches said: *"I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted my trees in them of all kinds of fruits: I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me"* (vv. 4-9).

Even though he was backslidden, he still had his wisdom, and he summed it all up in verses 10-11: ***"And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them..."*** (Whatever I saw that I wanted, I got it!) *"I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun."*

Having everything, anything that he desired, yet he said, "I was vexed, full of grief and sorrow. It didn't bring me any pleasure." What a tragedy! How much less can we expect from vain riches? Solomon concluded:

“And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done. Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly (exceeds foolish pleasures), as far as light excelleth darkness. The wise man’s eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.” (rich and poor!) “Then I said in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, **that this also is vanity**. For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? As the fool. Therefore I hated life...” (vv. 12-17).

The richest man who ever lived, who had whatever he wanted and whatever his heart and eyes desired, declared: “**I hated life!**” Another time he said, “In a thousand men, I’ve found one man, but in a thousand women I didn’t find one woman that my soul seeketh” (Ecc. 7:28). He had 1,000 wives and concubines; yet, he didn’t have one woman that he truly loved! He had a thousand of the most beautiful women in the world, and he said, “They don’t satisfy me!” Moreover, after he married these heathen women, they led him astray, and he built places of worship to their idols, forgot God, and God got angry with him. His lusts for heathen women and his riches brought him to the idol worship that David his father had destroyed and that God hated.

“Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: **for all is vanity and vexation**

of spirit” (vs. 17).

Solomon wrote many wise **Proverbs** about the folly of earthly riches and ill-gotten gain. Consider these pearls of wisdom he spoke before he became deceived by the three foolish lovers of self, money, and pleasures:

“For wisdom is better than rubies and all things that may be desired are not to be compared to it... Riches and honour are with me (wisdom); yea **durable riches** and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold; yea than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver” (8:11, 18-19).

He, no doubt, had been greatly influenced by his father, King David, who judiciously advised: “...when riches increase, set not your heart upon them” (Ps. 62:10). This is in accord with what Jesus taught in Luke 12:15, 33-34:

“And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth... Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that fadeth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Note that Jesus did **not** say, “**Where your heart is, there will your treasures be**”. **Because your heart follows your treasure!** This is why when riches increase, you should not set your heart upon them!

Solomon wrote numerous proverbs on riches and its snares, but we will end with this one from Proverbs 23:4-5: “Labor not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings: they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.”