

Does wealth make a marriage strong? (7:19-20)

For the man (i.e. my husband) is not at home. He has gone on a long journey. He has taken a bag of money with him. At full moon he will come home.

THE TEXT (NASB)

For the man (i.e. my husband) is not at home. He has gone on a long journey. **He has taken a bag of money with him.** At full moon he will come home.

For my husband is not at home. He has gone on a long journey. He has taken a bag of money with him. At the full moon he will come home. KJV - Proverbs 7:20

INTRODUCTION



Wealth does not make a marriage strong.

Riches do not reduce the appeal of vice, disloyalty, and selfishness.

In fact, riches very often increase the opportunities and seductions of such temptations.



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COMMENTARY

Unlike most of the texts on this site, here the context is critical. Proverbs 7 in context speaks of a wife using her financial freedom to cheat on her husband. Take a moment with the pre-ample Proverbs 7:5-20, and then find out what happens at the end Proverbs 7:20-27. Sadly, a common and ageless story.

This passage offers no direct advice on money management, but we can draw some relevant lessons from the whole chapter. The woman in this passage was obviously well-to-do. He has a bag of money when he leaves her, indicating that he can afford his long business trip, paying for food and lodging. So her husband was not poor, and therefore neither was she. Despite their family wealth, however, their marriage was obviously frayed. She was discontented and frustrated as a wife, so she thought nothing of committing adultery.

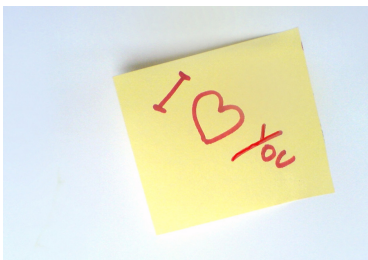
Don't Sacrifice Marriage for Money



Wealth does not make a woman loyal to her husband. Conclusion? We must be careful not to pursue wealth at the expense of our marriages. The problem is, having “a bag of money” or a healthy stock portfolio may cause us to trust in riches, rather than trusting in God. We may choose to care for our wealth, rather than care for the spouse He gave us.

Riches magnify this danger, because they seem to reduce our need for prayer and conversation with God, who “satisfies the desire of every living thing,” Psalm 145:16. Why ask God for my needs and wishes, when I can buy whatever I want? Those independently wealthy and healthy believe they have less need to be with God.

Dependence Promotes Communication



As with our prayer, the daily, continuous, and enlightening



WISDOM WITH WEALTH

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conversation between husbands and wives strengthens our marriages—and without this, nothing else can. That conversation becomes fuller and more meaningful, the more we share, including our financial interdependence: Having a single joint bank account, having one primary career, having a regular financial discussion “date,” all these things make our marriages more unified, more “one flesh” (John xxxx).

This need to acknowledge and amplify our dependence is also true about the silent conversation between God and His children. Elijah is described as a man of great faith and powerful prayers. One reason for such faith comes from Elijah’s dependence on God to supply—almost comically—his daily food during a time of national famine (1 Kings 17:6). Daily communication with God makes us less likely to believe that we’re somehow “the masters of our own fate,” and this will help us avoid falling into sin like sexual immorality. Riches, independent wealth, do not generate righteousness, and unless we are very careful, attentive, and intentional, it can easily lead to our corruption and misery.

OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND

Jesus sent His followers out on a working journey without any extra money or provisions (Matthew 10:9-10). By making them dependent on their Father, Jesus forced them to grow in faith.

Jesus wanted His followers and friends to learn that God faithfully provides our needs, when we are doing what He wants for us. Famous missionary Hudson Taylor once said, “Depend on it. God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s supply.”

Dependence on God is a good thing. The more a husband and wife both depend on God, the more they embrace and cultivate their dependency on each other. Their marriage is much stronger than when they both depend on money.

APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Avoid compromising situations.
- Travel with your spouse as much as possible. The apostles did this (1 Corinthians 9:5).
- Don’t trust in your financial resources. Instead, trust the Provider.

Which of these steps, if any, does Jesus want you to take now? Ask Him.



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KEY WORDS

adultery, freedom, home, ignorance, immorality, marriage, righteous, worse life (quality), bf spending

ILLUSTRATION

Who is Prudent Pauline?



Prudent Pauline is a planner. She looks before she leaps, she thinks before she speaks. Her favourite mottos are: "Haste makes waste," "brains over brawn," and "don't jump to conclusions."

When Pauline first heard that famous maxim: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step," she said NO! It begins with a good map. The map must be studied and the best route plotted. Consider road conditions, terrain, rest stops, refuelling, hostile territory, expected weather, travelling companions, clothing, supplies, and many more factors, including (if necessary) a guide.

She has studied the wisdom of Solomon and even helped teach him a thing or two. Solomon wrote these words about 3,000 years ago in honour of Prudent Pauline. "Whatever your hand finds to do (no matter what you are doing) do it with all your might (give it your full ability and energy) for there is no activity or planning or wisdom after you die—it will be too late." Pauline says, "First comes wisdom, then comes planning (her favourite activity), and then comes activity."

Pauline makes the time to do tax planning. She does a work plan every day. She uses a day



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timer or planner to assign priorities to her activities. She and Diligent Daniel are an incredible pair. Pauline does all her homework before she starts an activity.

