

How can you have lasting security? (12:3)

A man will not be established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous will not be moved.

THE TEXT (NASB)

A man will not be established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous will not be moved.

*A man shall not be established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.
Classic KJV - Proverbs 12:3*

INTRODUCTION



We all want to be secure. We all want to be rooted and withstand all the storms and droughts of life. We all want safety, stability, and strength, but we do not all get it.

Wealth provides a sense of safety, stability, and strength—that's why financial instruments are called "securities."

The secret to security is not holding an abundance of wealth, but it is found in the keystone quality and virtue, praised in this proverb.



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COMMENTARY

Translation



This text is easy to translate from the Hebrew, so almost all English translations are identical. It's interesting to note that a root gives both stability and nourishment. The expression "the root of the righteous" also appears in Proverbs 12:12, where it yields fruit.

This root provides both stability and productivity, and the text implies that there is only one root for all righteous people—not many roots. Further, the righteous find their one root outside themselves. They do not make their own root through navel-gazing or Transcendental Meditation. The person who is first connected to the righteous root then finds stability. The root does not move. It provides nourishment for both leaf and fruit. This analogy is similar to that of the vine and the branches in John 15, where Jesus said, "I am the vine and you are the branches." Jesus is the root of righteous. He is the root of Jesse, the father of David, Israel's greatest king (Isaiah 11:10).

Alternatives are Fleeting

Men often engage in "wickedness" in the attempt to get established, thinking that they can cut corners just to get started. But once they start cutting corners, they discover that they can never get enough, never enough to quiet the sense of insecurity caused by their shady methods. The accumulation of wealth, stored up as investments or bank account, is meant to be strategy for security, but it ends up breeding more insecurity. There's never enough.

As the author Phillip Keller says, "True security is not found in a bank, but in the assurance that God will take care of us¹." This assurance is not given to those who spurn God, putting their trust only in themselves. As the text says, regardless of the faux-security of wealth, wickedness provides no lasting security.

God's Promise Through Isaiah

At a time of great public turmoil and even terror, note whose needs will be met (emphasis added) :



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"Who among us can live with the consuming fire? Who among us can live with continual burning?" He who walks righteously, and speaks with sincerity, He who reject unjust gain and shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe. He who stops his ear from hearing about bloodshed and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil. **He will dwell on the heights. His refuge will be the impregnable rock. His bread will be given to him. His water will be sure²**

OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND

Jesus ascribes a stability to Himself greater than the entire planet! He says, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away," Matthew 24:35.

Jesus is the only sure foundation upon which anyone can build (1 Corinthians 3:11). He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). He is immovable. He is the root of the righteous. There is no righteousness in human nature (Romans 3:23).

Finally, and most importantly, Jesus is the complete and exclusive Savior of the entire world (Acts 4:12), available to all, but he saves only those who want to receive Him, who are prepared to accept Him as their saviour (John 1:11-13).

APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Analyse your ways of building security. Make sure they are not limited to your own efforts and abilities. Don't try to get it just with more wealth or insurance.
- Reject all forms of financial gain that are tainted with dishonesty. Such gain brings transitory benefits.
- Study the word *righteousness*. What does it mean? Where does it come from?

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



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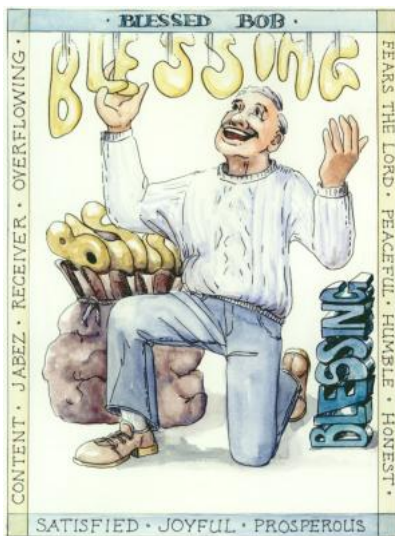
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KEY WORDS

anxiety, business, insurance, integrity, righteous, security, stability, wicked, worse life (quality)

ILLUSTRATION

Who is Blessed Bob?



Blessed Bob is very fortunate. He recognizes that good things come from God! God is shunned by many, but not by Bob. Bob loves God. He wants to receive all the good things that God has for him. He's not too proud to ask God for help. In fact, Bob prays often. Some think that he prays without ceasing. But he is not without fault. Blessed Bob makes many mistakes, and when he does, he admits his errors. He corrects them and presses on.

Bob gets so many blessings he feels overwhelmed. His cup overflows. But he doesn't hoard his blessings. Like Generous Genevieve, Blessed Bob likes to give to others. He is truly prosperous, even though there are many who are financially richer than he is.

We see examples of Blessed Bob in the Bible in the lives of Job and Joseph. Job went through some very good times (Job 29:2-25) and some very bad times (Job 2:7-8). Joseph had similar financial cycles (Genesis 39:2,21). Both men kept their focus on God, not on their financial condition (Job 1:21, Genesis 50:19-21).

More recently we have examples of those who have lived with the same life focus. R. G. LeTourneau was the inventor of the largest earth moving machines in the 1930's and 1940's. He credited God for his tremendous success. He gave away much of his wealth while he was still living saying that, "When I shovel money out to God's interests, God shovels money back to

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me, but God's shovel is bigger than mine." He was called the mover of men and mountains because of his great work and influence. On his gravestone, R. G. LeTourneau left all visitors with these words, SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU MATTHEW 6:33.

Blessed Bob is full of joy. He is satisfied with life!



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FOOTNOTES

1. Sorry - exact reference lost
2. Isaiah 33: 14b-16 NASB 1995

