

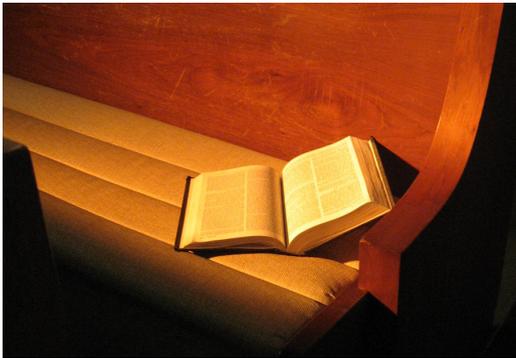
Does your attitude toward the Bible affect your wealth? (13:13)

THE TEXT (NASB)

The one who despises the word will be in debt to it, but the one who fears the commandment will be rewarded.

Who so despiseth the word shall be destroyed, but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded. Classic KJV - Proverbs 13:13

INTRODUCTION



This proverb deals only indirectly with the financial realm.

The financial terms are debt and reward, used as metaphors to explain our relationship to God's Word, but there are parallels between the financial and the spiritual realms, because the righteous marketplace can be a (pale) reflection of the spiritual.

For example, the principles of personal responsibility and especially "servant leadership" are shared by both realms, designed by the same Creator.



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COMMENTARY

The rewards of obedience to God's commandments are not necessarily financial, yet financial terms are used to explain their cause-and-effect relationship. God's Word is like an instruction manual on the laws of life, like the acrostic for Bible: Basic Instruction Before Leaving Earth.

The Word: The Bible



If we minimize or marginalize God's Word, we are the losers, not God. When God's Word, the Bible, clashes with our culture, our human legal system, or our personal preferences and attitudes, then guess who wins? The Word is permanent and everlasting—outliving Heaven and Earth (Matthew 24:35). This fact is either very disturbing and uncomfortable, even outrageous, or it is extremely comforting, consoling, and motivating. We can love the Bible or hate the Bible, but we can't make it go away, nor rob it of any of its power.

Some Nations Hate the Bible

Cultural practices are transitory and unreliable, and throughout history, many nations have despised and outlawed the Bible. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), born of the 1917 communist Russian Revolution, violently banned the Scriptures and all worship for 70 years. In pursuit of "Heaven on Earth" and a "Workers' Paradise," its dictators engaged in forced industrialization, financed by stolen harvests, that starved literally millions of peasant farmers to death. Millions more were executed or exiled to labour camps for their faith in Christ. When this empire crumbled in the late 1980s, it was publicly exposed that the Russian economy was crippled and its people completely demoralized. Many Russians are now trying to recover their Christian faith and to resurrect their national life.



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OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND

Jesus of Nazareth had more respect for God's word than anyone who ever lived: In fact, Jesus the Christ (the "Anointed") completely identified with the Word of God.

Jesus was the "Word who became flesh and dwelt among us," John 1:14, fully God and fully Man. The fully-human Jesus relied on God's word more than his necessary food (Matthew 4:4—compare Job 23:12). The human Jesus did nothing on his own initiative (John 5:30), but did only the will of His Father. He did all things to fulfill the Scriptures—even when it caused him more intense suffering than anyone else could ever experience (John 19:28).

Because Jesus Christ obeyed the word perfectly, because he was the perfect servant leader, He has been given the greatest reward. "In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power, and wealth, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and praise!" Revelations 5:12.

APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Don't put your own opinions or beliefs ahead of the Bible.
- Don't approach the Bible merely from an academic viewpoint.
- If you want rewards, DO what the Bible says.

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



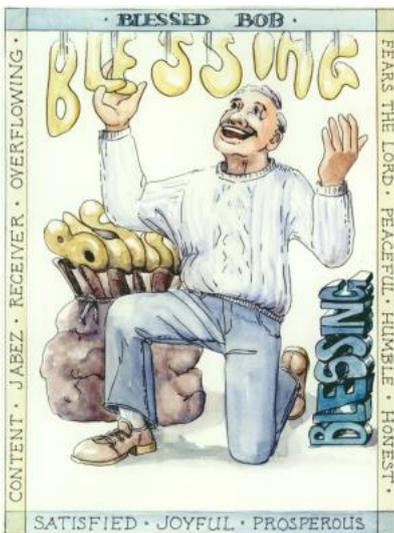
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KEY WORDS

apathy, debt, hate, fear, honor, more assets (quantity), respect, retribution, reverence, reward

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!

