

Why do riches sometimes bring disappointment? (11:18)

THE TEXT (NASB)

The wicked earns deceptive wages, but he who sows righteousness gets a true reward.

The wicked worketh a deceitful work, but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward. Classic KJV - Proverbs 11:18

INTRODUCTION



Sometimes we expect too much from wealth. We'll often think that hard work brings wealth, and wealth brings satisfaction, security, and peace. Not always true!

In this text, both the wicked and righteous are working. Neither is lazy; both are busy. Yet the consequences for each, what they get, are very different.

Evil work brings illusory rewards, but good work brings lasting benefits. Mere productivity is not sufficient for real satisfaction. Our ultimate financial return is always shaped by our working methods. Sometimes a highly-anticipated reward turns out a sham and a huge disappointment.



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COMMENTARY



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Translation Differences

In translating this text's first phrase, the NASB (in gold) differs dramatically from the KJV (blue link), and it's hard to say which is better. The KJV simply restates the obvious—namely that the wicked are deceitful. The NASB is likely the more complete version here, though both are in harmony with the language and overall biblical teaching.

Inspecting Income



The text expresses a basic law of cause and effect. If we want assurance that our earnings will endure, we must look more to the way we earn our money, rather than elaborate steps to protect it. So, rather than overinvesting in various sorts of insurance, we should invest in honesty and diligence. Sowing righteousness means an honest day's work in a respectable profession.

Preserving Benefits

We've all heard the warning, "Buyer Beware," but this text adds another, "Earner Beware." So the text questions the endurance of the rewards for our labour. Something is deceptive, when it looks like one thing, but turns out to be another, when the appearance lies about the reality. And rewards that don't endure really aren't rewards at all. Honesty and diligence are qualities that build real wealth and a lasting business. Righteousness is doing what is honest and fair. Acts of charity may be suggested, but it requires proper business dealings.

A True Reward

The text does not specify the "true reward." but it implies the difference between false rewards and true rewards. A holistic reward is multidimensional. I always enjoyed playing chess and when I first saw the following video I was shocked by the introduction of a third dimension.

[Click here to view video](#)

For a better understanding of the multi-dimensional aspects of a true reward, consider the following question: [How can you get God's full reward?](#)



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OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER, AND FRIEND

Jesus sowed Himself.

He described Himself as a grain of wheat, which if planted into the ground (i.e. buried in death) would result in much new life for others (John 12:24-35).

He Himself is the epitome of a seed being planted in righteousness, and then yielding much benefit to others - a life-giving Spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45).

APPLICATION

- Memorize the text in your favourite Bible translation and think about it often.
- Are you looking to wealth and riches for your sense of self-worth? Do not expect from wealth that which comes from God alone.
- How do you “sow righteousness?” In other words what seeds of good are you planting? Rather than doing *random* acts of kindness do them *deliberately*.
- Think about the time delay between the planting and the harvesting. In our instant gratification age, we often abandon the right way too quickly.

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



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KEY WORDS

deceit, ethics, illusion, income, insurance, money laundering, reward, righteous, virtue, wicked, worse life (quality), bf serving others

ILLUSTRATION

Who is Tax-Driven Ted?



Death and taxes: The only things we can be sure of! Certainly that's the way Tax-Driven Ted sees it. Whereas others pay some or little attention to taxes, he is consumed by tax minimization. Ted is tax obsessed. Why? For many Canadians, if left unmanaged, taxes eliminate over 50% of income. In Canada tax freedom day falls in July.

Tax freedom day is the day of the year when you have paid all your taxes and can now keep the rest of the money you earn. Tax-Driven Ted will spend money just to get a write-off. He fails to seriously evaluate the underlying economics behind the decision and chooses to focus on the tax consequences. He loves to borrow money to invest simply because he can write off the interest costs of amount borrowed. This investment technique is called leveraging and is commonplace.

Ted doesn't believe he should pay any taxes. After all, the government wastes money. It's extremely inefficient. He uses every angle to reduce taxes. He's always looking for loopholes, credits, or write-offs. *His focus is not on customer satisfaction but on tax reduction.*



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He goes on trips and conferences so that he can take the tax write-offs. He loves limited partnerships investments and other tax shelters. For some investors tax considerations are secondary, but for Tax-Driven Ted, they come first.



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FOOTNOTES

This is a footnote

