

Consider Jesus – in the Possession of Wealth

Thoughts for Daily Duty, Service, and Suffering

By Octavius Winslow

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"Consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess."—Hebrews 3:1

"He was RICH."—2 Cor. 8:9

Rank and wealth may exist apart from each other. In Jesus they were combined. He could not be the Divinest, and not be the Richest Being in the universe; the Creator, and not the Owner of all worlds. Moreover, He could say, "All SOULS are mine" — a wealth second only to the affluence of His own absolute Godhead. Thus He becomes a study for the wealthy — a study for a rich Christian — oppressed with the anxieties, exposed to the snares, armed with the power, and speeding to the final Judgment laden with the fearful responsibilities and the solemn account of WEALTH! But, 'Consider Him.'

Jesus ascribed His wealth to God. While asserting essential Deity, He ever acknowledged His dependence upon His Father as the Mediator and Redeemer of man. In this light we interpret His remarkable declaration — "The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He sees the Father do." "As the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself." Thus consider Him! To God you owe, and to God you are bound to ascribe, your wealth. Your own efforts and skill had been a failure, disappointing and ruinous, but for His enriching blessing. Say not in your heart, "My power and the might of mine hand has gotten me this wealth. But you shall remember the Lord your God: for it is HE that gives you power to get wealth." Do you thus give God the glory? And as you survey your broad acres, and count your treasured gold, and speculate on your profitable investments, do you in your heart gratefully and devoutly acknowledge, "I owe all this to God! Not my hand, nor my skill, nor my toil, but to Your favor, help, and blessing, O Lord, alone I attribute it?"

Jesus, though rich, was destitute of the PRIDE of wealth. Human pride is one of the most operative causes of self-destruction — and wealth is its prolific parent. "Behold," says God to Jerusalem, "this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom,

pride and fullness of bread." The poor are often oppressed with a sense of their insignificance, but the rich are prone to be inflated and self-important, "pride" — purse-pride — "compassing them about as a chain." Rejoice if Divine grace has taught you your spiritual poverty, nothingness, and vileness, so enabling you to walk humbly with God in your wealth. "Let the rich rejoice in that he is made low:" — laid low beneath the cross — "because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away."

Jesus was free from the WORLDLINESS of wealth. The rich are peculiarly exposed to the world. The means which they possess of surrounding themselves with its pomp and show, its luxury and pleasures, are a terrible snare, which the grace of God alone can conquer. Study Jesus! With the world at His command, how unworldly! From not thus studying and imitating Him, many a wealthy professor has made shipwreck of his faith, character, and usefulness, swept away by the irresistible force of unsanctified riches. "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world." Oh! beware of the world! Your "riches will become corrupt, your gold and your silver cankered, and their rust shall be a witness against you," if they plunge you into the temptations, covetousness, and sins of this present evil world!

Jesus devoted His riches to the glory of God. Is your wealth thus devoted? Is "Holiness to the Lord" impressed upon your coin? Whose superscription does it bear? Christ has poor brethren needing help. His cause languishes from lack of support. His devoted, faithful ministers, many of them, are toiling amid straitness and pinching poverty. Oh, liberally scatter your wealth, and as you lay it down at the feet of Jesus, exclaim with lowliness and gratitude, "Of Your own have I given You, dearest Lord!" Thus cultivating a generous liberality, watching against the temptations of riches, and keeping in full view the solemn account of your stewardship, let your constant, earnest prayer be — "In all times of our WEALTH, good Lord, deliver us!"

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