

Are We Living for What Really Matters?



“6 They trust in their wealth and boast of great riches. 7 Yet they cannot redeem themselves from death by paying a ransom to God.” Psalm 49: 6-7 NLT

- What matters most to you in life? If you listed the top three priorities of your life, what would they be?

The world is obsessed with material things, wealth, and the power it brings. The central message of Psalm 49 can be summarized by a profound question that Jesus made in Mark 8:35-37 (NLT), *“35 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. 36 And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? 37 Is anything worth more than your soul?”*

The key verse that sums up the message of Psalm 49 is verses 6-7. **Some people are trusting in their resources for this life but their resources cannot help them with their after-life, or eternal destiny.** In essence, they are living for the wrong things. They are living only for this life. They are living only what the world has to offer. They are short-sighted. They are not preparing for their eternal existence.

This Psalm is much more philosophical than most of the ones that precede it. It addresses the issue of **what matters most in this life and do you live for the most important?** This is not about whether you have money and material things, but rather, do money and material things have you. It addresses the question - what matters most to you in life?

Central Lesson:

Life can be rich without money—if we live for God’s priorities.

Why is it important to live for what really matters?

1. It is the **SMART** way to live. (49:1-4).

“1 Listen to this, all you people! Pay attention, everyone in the world! 2 High and low, rich and poor—listen! 3 For my words are wise, and my thoughts are filled with insight. 4 I listen carefully to many proverbs and solve riddles with inspiration from a harp.”

The book of Proverbs is a collection of God’s wisdom for living.

2. It **REDUCES** stress and fear levels (49:5).

“5 Why should I fear when trouble comes, when enemies surround me?”

3. It prevents being **SHORT-SIGHTED** in life. (49:6-9).

“6 They trust in their wealth and boast of great riches. 7 Yet they cannot redeem themselves from death by paying a ransom to God. 8 Redemption does not come so easily, for no one can ever pay enough 9 to live forever and never see the grave.”

The *Life Application Study Bible* comments (49:7, 8, 15), “In the slave market of the ancient world, a slave had to be redeemed (someone had to pay the price) in order to go free. In Mark 10:45; Ephesians 1:7; and Hebrews 9:12, we learn that **Jesus paid such a price** so that we could be set free from slavery to sin in order to begin a new life with him.

There is no way for a person to buy eternal life with God. **God alone can redeem a soul.** Don’t count on wealth and physical comforts to keep you happy because you will never have enough wealth to keep you from dying.”

4. It understands that we can’t take material **RICHES** with us (49:10-13).

“10 Those who are wise must finally die, just like the foolish and senseless, leaving all their wealth behind. 11 The grave is their eternal home, where they will stay forever. They may name their estates after themselves, 12 but their fame will not last. They will die, just like animals. 13 This is the fate of fools, though they are remembered as being wise. Interlude”

Again, the *Life Application Study Bible* comments (49:10-14), “The rich and poor have one similarity: when they die, they leave all they own here on earth. At the moment of death (and all of us will face that moment), both rich and poor are naked and empty-handed before God. **The only riches we have at that time are those we have already invested in our eternal heritage.** At the time of death, each of us will wish we had invested less on earth, where we must leave it, and more in heaven, where we will retain it forever. **To have treasure in heaven, we must place our faith in God, pledge ourselves to obey him, and utilize our resources for the good of his Kingdom.** This is a good time to check up on your investments and see where you have invested the most. Then do whatever it takes to place your investments where they really count.”

5. It understands that in the long-run of life, our wealth and accomplishments are **TEMPORARY** when we could make a difference for eternity (49:14-15).

“14 Like sheep, they are led to the grave, where death will be their shepherd. In the morning the godly will rule over them. Their bodies will rot in the grave, far from their grand estates. 15 But as for me, God will redeem my life. He will snatch me from the power of the grave. Interlude”

6. It helps put materialism and the love of this world’s glamor and gold in **PERSPECTIVE**—the world’s riches are not rich in comparison to eternity. Pursue eternal riches. (49:16-20).

“16 So don’t be dismayed when the wicked grow rich and their homes become ever more splendid. 17 For when they die, they take nothing with them. Their wealth will not follow them into the grave. 18 In this life they consider themselves fortunate and are applauded for their success. 19 But they will die like all before them and never again see the light of day. 20 People who boast of their wealth don’t understand; they will die, just like animals.”

Don’t envy the glamor of this world; invest your life in what matters most—**faith, family, health, finances.**

Central Lesson:

Life can be rich without money—if we live for God’s priorities.

- ▶ Accept Christ as your Savior. ▶ As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ.
- ▶ Invite someone to next Sunday’s study. ▶ Attend a small group. ▶ Read the Bible this week & journal meaningful verses. ▶ Pray for friends that need Jesus.