

When Increase Comes

By Jeffrey Bush

Psalm 62:10 – “if riches increase, set not your heart upon them”

Many times in life God blesses us spiritually, physically, with friends, family, and yes, even materially. I don't think anyone would turn down a raise at work, a bonus, or a big financial gift. In fact, it makes it a pretty good day when God chooses to increase what we have. Although every person should be careful not to set their hearts upon the increase, I want to take this view from the point of someone in the ministry who receives increase in life. There are some grave dangers that can occur when the Lord chooses to give material increase in our lives, and I hope these simple thoughts can provoke strong reactions of carefulness as we minister for the Lord.

1. Increase makes us want more.

Let's be honest; it is human nature to want more. The world has a strong marketing system making us think that we need to have more of *anything*. Technology advances, and we begin to want the newest, fastest, and best. Pretty soon we are not happy with what we currently have. We begin to want a better car, computer, phone, etc. If we are not careful, increase will only make us unsatisfied and want more.

2. Increase makes us stingy.

Many people that have a sweet and generous spirit soon lose that spirit because increase has made them want to get and not to give. We must remember that it is still better to give than receive (Acts 20:35), even if it sounds like a crazy idea. Being generous probably does not have as much to do with *amounts* as it does *attitude*. When someone wants to give and help it is a wonderful thing, but over and over I have seen that when someone is on the receiving end, they begin to hoard more than to be generous. I have received gifts from people both foreign and state-side and the temptation has been strong to think, “Hey, I deserve this; this is great.” When I see someone else to whom I could be a blessing, I keep the bills tight in my pocket, not wanting to let go of them. Here is some great advice from the wisest earthly king: “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty” (Proverbs 11:24). Don't allow the increase to stop you from being generous; it should be an incentive to be more generous.



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3. Increase becomes normal

It is wonderful when God brings increase into our lives, but if we are not careful we will begin to think we deserve it. At first we say thank you many times over but after a while we almost expect it. Over and over God tells us to enter before Him or pray to Him with thanksgiving (Psalm 100:4; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2). A child of God should thank the Lord for how He blesses, and it would do us all good to thank other people as well. An attitude of thankfulness sadly is not found as much as it should be.

Increase has ruined many good men, both in churches and in ministry. May God help all of us not allow increase in our lives or ministries to make us stingy or unthankful; may we learn to be humble and thankful for how good God is to us.



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Enquiry into Our Obligation

William Carey said, "The impediments in the way of carrying the gospel among the heathen must arise, I think, from one or other of the following things; either their distance from us, their barbarous and savage manner of living, the danger of being killed by them, the difficulty of procuring the necessaries of life, or the unintelligibleness of their languages."

Not much has changed since William Carey's day with respect as to why we do not go. We can see in his statement the pattern for why we also have failed to evangelize our neighbors.

1. **The Distance:** Since it is obviously a long way to their house we never have time to go there.
2. **They are barbarians:** They are different from us in some way.
3. **We fear them:** They might reject us or ridicule us in the community.
4. **Getting the necessities of life becomes difficult:** It may inconvenience us or alter our normal Sunday schedule.
5. **They are hard to understand:** We have never mingled with them enough to learn their language.