

Partners In Courage, August 2013

# Rich In Every Way

Sermon by Wes Daughenbaugh

**TEXT:** 2Cor. 9:6-11 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **And God is able to make all grace abound to you**, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: “He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.” Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ***You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.***

**INTRODUCTION:** There are a lot of different ways to be rich. Lately, I’ve been thinking a lot about this, because I’d like to be rich in EVERY way, not just one or two ways. I’m convinced that not very many people in history have been made RICH IN EVERY WAY. To be rich in every way would require that a person appropriate God’s grace in every way that true riches can be measured. First, we should become aware of the different ways that a person can be rich. Then we should look over the list and evaluate whether we are rich or poor in each area. After that, we should firmly decide to become rich in whatever area we are poor in. When that decision is made we must do two things: 1. We must take lots of action with special attention to small daily disciplines that move us forward and 2. We must humbly pray and ask for the coaching of the Holy Spirit and the grace He imparts. Now, for your prayerful consideration, here is an overview of the various ways in which we can become rich.

## Here are the areas in which we can become rich.

### 1. RICH IN INTIMACY WITH GOD.

Jer. 9:23-24 KJV **Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.**

A man can be rich in wisdom, rich in health, and rich in money—and all those are ways to be rich. But they are not the SUPREME way to measure true and eternal wealth. Intimate oneness with God is the true “glory”.

Jesus prayed, **“I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me”** (John 17:22-23).

Intimate “oneness” with God through Christ is the true “glory” available for all who want all of God and want God to have all of them.

### 2. RICH IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Philippians 3:7-9 **But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may**

**gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.**

Right standing with God means having your name written in the Book of Life, having all your sins forgiven, and having access to come directly into the presence of God and be comfortable. The persecution the Apostle Paul was enduring for Christ’s sake had robbed him of earthly wealth, and probably of physical health, and also robbed him of the riches of longevity. Yet he was so thrilled with the knowledge that he was rich in righteousness—that he regarded the loss of earthly riches and earthly blessings as if he was losing only things that rot and decay. The word “rubbish” can be translated “dung”. That’s strong language.

Jesus said, **“What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?”** (Mark 8:36). Paul also wrote, **“For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it”** (1 Timothy 6:7).

### 3. RICH IN SPIRITUAL REVELATION

Jesus said, **“For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these”** (John 5:20).

John wrote about Jesus, **“He did not need man’s testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man”** (John 2:25).

John 14:26 **But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.**

Those early disciples who walked with Jesus may have seemed poor in the eyes of the world, but they were rich in spiritual revelation. To them Jesus said, **“I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you”** (John 15:15).

No amount of money can buy a revelation from God. The prophets, who were usually persecuted, sometimes imprisoned or martyred got to hear God speak. “The Word of the Lord came to me” is a common saying of people like Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Amos. To be rich in communication from God—WOW. Each time we hear from God it is priceless.

### 4. RICH IN WISDOM

Proverbs. 4:5-9 **“Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them. Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. Esteem her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will honor you. She will set a garland of grace on your head and present you with a crown of splendor.”**

God’s wisdom will give you victory and success in this life (a garland of grace) and eternal rewards that will never fade (a crown of splendor).

Prov. 8:10-11 **Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her.**

### 5. RICH IN FAITH

James 2:5 **Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?**

If we have faith in Christ we become joint heirs with Jesus and inherit the Kingdom of God in all its glory and splendor. By faith we are already rich beyond any billionaire in this world. Jesus said it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God (Luke 18:25). I’m sure Jesus was *not* saying it’s evil to be rich in money. He just meant that no rich man could BUY his way into the kingdom of heaven. Billions, even trillions of

dollars cannot buy entrance into the Kingdom of God. A man rich in money can also be rich in faith. But only the riches of faith will cause that man or woman to gain entrance into eternal splendor.

## 6. RICH IN VIRTUES

**1Tim. 4:8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.**

On earth, the value of physical possessions is measured in some currency of money. But godliness—the sum total of character virtues, has value that can be taken to heaven. This value is not measured in what you *have* but rather in what you *become*.

\*\*\*\* When I was in my early 30's a board member bought me a Franklin Day Planner and the cassettes that taught time management and personal organization. I learned that Ben Franklin chose twelve virtues to build his life around. He defined each one, and at the end of each day he would go over his list and evaluate himself to see if he was habitually practicing those virtues. At the end of his life he attributed his success and influence to that list of virtues. I thought that was a great idea. So I picked twelve. But I soon found that becoming like Christ would be impossible with only twelve virtues. So I decided I wanted to put every virtue on my list. Now, thirty years later, my “virtue list” has 117 virtues, all with definitions. From time to time I look over this list and see which ones I'm not doing much in. I absolutely LOVE and DELIGHT in my virtue list. Paul wrote, **“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in *all things* grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ”** (Ephesians 4:15). “All things” means all the character virtues.

\*\*\*\* *Peter recommended that we all have a virtue list.* “Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may *participate* in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

**“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (2Pet. 1:2-8).

\*\*\*\* I call this “THE GRACE BUFFET”. Jesus pays for our ticket and we are given a “faith plate” and told to add whatever virtue we want to that faith plate. In this way, we do not just watch Jesus being Jesus. Rather, we participate in the divine nature! We become just like Jesus! And becoming just like Jesus is the goal and prize of the Christian faith—the high calling Paul talked of.

Annie Schisler has had many awesome visions, which I cherish. She has seen in spiritual visions those who become JUST LIKE JESUS. She writes, “Before the cloud of gold I saw a limited number—too many to count yet not a great multitude—of flaming fires also of this same golden material but also like clouds. They seemed to be exactly like He was, the only difference being that they were smaller in size. Though very large, they were still not as large as He was. Otherwise they were exactly like Him in the cloud in all other respects.

“Along the sides and round about the living fires I saw golden, flaming, living-stones made of the same material as the Cloud but unlike the other living-stones in that they were much larger and more aflame. Slightly smaller than the living fires, the living-stones were so aflame that they seemed to be ever consuming themselves yet never being consumed. Then he spoke saying that these—indicating the fires and the flaming stones—were just like He was and were a part of Himself. These fiery clouds and the flaming stones were specially loved and chosen by Him. No one else, no other living-stone, could ever enter into this place. The flaming stones would go out and minister unto the other stones but the cloud-fires would stay within with Him forever, ever reigning with Him. He further said that these beings, chosen by Him and specially loved, were those who had been made fully into His image, and that even now they were a very part of Himself.

“These great beings were so far above all other beings, even far above all the angels. In truth, they were just like Him. I wondered greatly and could not understand and was greatly distressed in spirit because of what I had seen. He spoke to me quieting my spirit, “These things are true and shall shortly come to pass.” (I SAW THE LORD, BOOK 1, PAGE 99-100 , “The Reigning Ones.”

I believe this is what Paul was referring to when he wrote, **“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize”** (1 Corinthians 9:24).

My personal opinion is that God lets these special ones suffer a whole lot of rejection, insults, persecutions and the like which would look to the earthly eye like they were not being blessed at all! But in reality, those various trials and crises cause them to appropriate more and more grace and end up being vehicles by which God brings these people into great intimacy with Himself.

I believe we should all want to WIN THE PRIZE. Of course, not even Paul could say he was going to be one of these. Philippians. 3:12-14 **“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”**

When Elisha asked for a “double portion” of the Spirit of Elijah he was told by the prophet Elijah, **“You have asked a hard thing”** (2 Kings 2:10). Similarly, wanting to be JUST LIKE JESUS is a *hard* thing. While others are blessed with an easier path that doesn’t require infinite patience and total self-control, the reigning fires are blessed with situations that are too hard for baby Christians or even fairly mature Christians to handle. It would seem that God is destroying them. Not many will allow God to completely destroy all that is not of Him, leaving nothing left but what is just like Him. Almost all settle for lesser blessings that seem much more like blessings. God taught me, *Self-Pity is the life support system for the “old man” we are supposed to crucify, deny, put off and lose! Unplug it!*

\*\*\*\* I think it would be a very good thing to be rich in money and be a millionaire here on earth. But those who will be the richest people of all for eternity will be those who become just like Jesus in character. Like Paul, they may “suffer the loss of all things.”

\*\*\*\* I believe we should all desire to be rich in virtues and delight in them. We should all collect them by making a list, defining each one to show what it would look like if fleshed out in our lives. We should ever be adding these virtues to our faith plate, taking full advantage of the grace of God. It’s not crazy to aim for the bulls-eye of any target! Aim to be just like Jesus!

Prov. 31:10 KJV **Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.**

1Pet. 3:3-4 **Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.**

Gentleness is a virtue. Quietness of spirit is a virtue. They are of great worth in God’s sight.

#8. On my list: THANKFUL. Overflow with thanksgiving for blessings past, present and future. Always give Jesus the glory. Be thankful to God and express it to people, too. Say “thank you” in unforgettable ways. Practice thanksgiving drills.

#32 On my list: TEACHABILITY. Be eager to learn. Store up knowledge. Depend on the Holy Spirit to verify truth from all sources. Seek out teachers. Spend money to learn.

Remember, Peter said to “Add to your faith...knowledge.” This is a lifelong process. We can be rich in knowledge and with it, bless multitudes. The knowledge of God is, of course, the greatest knowledge of all. It is a true saying, “All leaders are readers.” Build a library of good books!

These are just samplings from my Virtue List. The entire list of 117 virtues is available on my web site, [www.christsaffection.com](http://www.christsaffection.com).

My point—why not make your own list and start adding virtues to your faith plate? It is, after all, a grace buffet, an “all you can eat” buffet. You get as much of God as you are hungry for.

## 5. RICH IN GOOD DEEDS

Paul wrote to Timothy, “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. **Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds**, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Everyone on earth will someday stand before Jesus Christ and go through their entire inventory of good deeds—or the lack of them. Our Lord will recount how many times we fed Him when He was hungry, how many times we clothed Him when He was naked, how many times we visited Him in prison, how many times we helped Him get a drink when He was thirsty and so on. (Matthew 25:31-46). Those who have no “wealth” of good deeds will be sent away into eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

Of course, we don’t earn our salvation with works, but if we have real salvation by faith it will be demonstrated as being living faith—faith that is alive--by the good things we do.

\*\*\*\* Young students of ministry have asked me, “What’s the key to being anointed?” One of the things I tell them is, “Fill each day with little acts of kindness. That is practicing the anointing.” They look at me as if to say, “Is that all?” Don’t overlook this small bit of advice. You are truly “rich” if you are “rich in good deeds.”

## 6. RICH IN ANOINTING AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

Acts 3:6 Then Peter said, **Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.**” The man who was healed had been lame from his mother’s womb!

Miracles like this cannot be purchased with money. Money can hire doctors to do amazing things, but these kinds of spiritual gifts go far beyond what even modern medicine can do. This kind of wealth was certainly part of what Paul was talking about when he said about himself, **“As being poor yet making many rich”** (2 Corinthians 6:10). He was so rich in this area of anointing that handkerchiefs that touched his body were taken to the sick and demon oppressed and the anointing from Paul, abiding in that cloth, healed and delivered them! (Acts 19:11-12). The Bible says, **“God did extraordinary miracles through Paul.”**

That’s really saying something. A *miracle* goes beyond everything that is ordinary. *Extraordinary* miracles go beyond even miracles!

## 7. RICH IN SOULS.

Proverbs 11:30 **He who wins souls is wise.** Each human soul is worth more than the entire created universe, because they were purchased by the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. You can take souls with you to heaven, but not gold, silver or property.

\*\*\*\* Kenneth Hagin, in his book I BELIEVE IN VISIONS tells of being taken to the top of a crusade tent in the Spirit and standing in the air with Jesus who held a dazzling soul winners crown. Jesus told Hagin that He had one for every one of His children but so few cared anything about souls. This is a marvelous way to become rich!

Dan. 12:3 **Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.**

*If you want to be one of the “stars” in the Kingdom of God, you will need to become rich in souls!*

Psalms 2:8 **Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.**

\*\*\*\* I remember hearing Sevell Phillips tell about the time he ate lunch at a Mongolian restaurant. The placemat had a map of Mongolia on it. He laid his hands on it and said, “Father, I ask you to give me souls in Mongolia.” That week a man called him who had the ability to translate the

Bible in Mongolian. Brother Phillips ministry helped him and the Bible came out in a new language—and souls were won to Christ, because he simply ASKED God for souls in Mongolia!

## 8. RICH IN DISCIPLES

\*\*\*\* Once I told the Lord that I wished I had more bodies to serve Him with. I thought if I could have three of me I could be a missionary with one body, a pastor with one body, and an evangelist with the other body. I looked at the copy machine and said, “Oh Lord, I love you so much I just wish I could put myself in that copy machine and make thousands of me to serve you all over the world.” God spoke to me, “Do it.” Since then I’ve made thousands of books, booklets, sermon CD’s and tracts, and brochures to sign up bus kids—close to one million copies of me, in fact. But the greatest kind of “copy” is to make a living disciple.

Jesus was rich in disciples. They carried on His work and mission and have caused all He did to be multiplied all over the world.

At this time in my life I sense God wanting me to copy myself into younger ministers through doing seminars for pastors and church leaders in other countries, particularly in the financially impoverished areas of the world. These students who absorb my teachings will outlive me, most likely, and continue to multiply what God has taught me.

We could all pursue this kind of “wealth” by teaching a class, or being a mentor to someone. Jesus said, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”** (Matt. 28:18-20).

Since the age of nineteen I’ve desired to bring God glory. I’ve made that the primary goal of my life. My prayer changed to “help me bring you *massive* glory” after about 10 years of praying God would use me to bring Him glory. One day the Holy Spirit showed me five ways to bring Him glory.

1. Basic Glory (Live a life of love and model character virtues)
2. Added Glory (Win souls. Then there are more of you to model Christ-like behavior.)
3. Multiplied Glory (Train leaders. This multiplies disciples and souls.)
4. Great Glory. (Keep your heart pure so that your prayers can accomplish really great things.)
5. Compound Interest Glory. Keep on doing what is right and even small good deeds will have a compounding effect resulting in something massive over a life-time.

Basic Glory is like your thumb—the most important of all your fingers. Added glory is like your index finger. Multiplied glory is like your longest finger. Training disciples/spiritual leaders will have the longest reach and longest lasting legacy. Great glory is like your second longest finger. Compound Interest Glory is like your little finger. Now make a fist and say, “Massive glory to God!”

Making disciples is a major part of bringing God massive glory. *Your ultimate wealth will be determined by how much glory you bring to God. That’s what it is all going to be measured in.* It won’t be measured in dollars, gold, silver or real estate.

## 9. RICH IN LONGEVITY.

Years ago God taught me that my health was “priority area #2” right after my relationship with God because “a dead servant can’t serve anybody.” This kind of “wealth” is only for this life, but it will give you time to develop the other lasting kinds of wealth—like souls, disciples and good deeds. The longer you live, the richer you can become in those areas. So why not earnestly desire longevity?

Most people plan their vacations more carefully than they make a longevity plan. I have a longevity plan. To bring massive glory to God I need time for the compounding effect to work on a life of good deeds. My plan is to drink at least two 20 ounce bottles of water a day, eat a bowl of frozen blue berries every day, exercise by walking four miles a day, weigh 140 pounds (my ideal weight), take Super Beta Prostate support pills, Glucosamine/Chondroitin/MSM, Laminine (2 capsules) fish oil, vitamin D, multi-vitamins for men, Melatonin at night, and two ounces of Jusuru. I eat nutritious food while eating very little of junk food, fast food and processed food. Supreme in my

longevity plan is to live in emotional peace without being torn apart by anger, bitterness, self-pity and other negative emotions.

**Proverbs. 14:30 A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.**

**Proverbs. 17:22 A merry heart doeth good *like* a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.**

**Nehemiah 8:10 Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."**

**Ephesians. 5:29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church.**

Longevity is one of the virtues on my list and my definition of what it would be like if fleshed out in my life is simple: "Care for your body as Christ cares for the church."

\*\*\*\* I urge all my friends who are over 50 years of age to make a longevity plan. A long and healthy life isn't going to happen by accident. It will happen by intention, discipline and the keeping power of God. Say, "I must! I can! I will!" Get your plan and work your plan!

## 10. RICH IN LEADERSHIP.

**1Corinthians. 11:1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.**

Leadership is influence. It has the ability to develop teams, involve others, and achieve great visions through involving, motivating, training and overseeing the work of many others.

I want to be rich in this area. As a teacher I know that I influence many, and I do give them an example to follow. However, I want to be able to develop a great team that would fulfill a vision to help native pastors around the world on a much larger scale. We have a small "team" now and are doing some beautiful things for God's glory in various nations. I have a greater desire than ever to learn all I can and improve in my ability to lead. I'm reading new books on leadership and re-reading books I've already read because I seem to be absorbing more in this area than I used to. To be rich in influence—godly influence—so that great visions can be achieved--that is a marvelous form of wealth! I'd love to have you pray for me that God would make me truly RICH in this vital area!

## 14. RICH IN RELATIONSHIPS

**Song 8:7 Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned.**

**3John 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.**

Families that are kept intact and that serve God and keep the circle unbroken are one of the greatest treasures of all. I've been listening to recordings of Jim Rohn. He said, "All gardens will be invaded." Whatever we sow in a garden we also have to protect from bugs, weeds, and rabbits! He said to think that your garden won't be invaded is naïve. Families and relationships are constant work. No good family relationship will come easily or last without maintenance.

Paul wrote, Gal. 4:19-20 **My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you, how I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you!**

Raising children is like this. The labor pains of a mother won't be the only pain. The errors and waywardness of children can be heartbreaking and may require more "travail" than the original birthing process! However, like any other area of true "wealth", God can and will help us be truly rich in this area if we work at it with all our hearts. Jim Rohn wisely said, "If you want to be wealthy, study wealth. If you want to be healthy, study health. If you want healthy relationships, study relationships." To be rich in this area we should study and read whatever we can about healthy marriages and how to properly influencing our children and grandchildren—and even great grandchildren.

## 15. RICH IN INTEGRITY

**Prov. 22:1 A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.**

A good name comes from the kind of integrity that practices what you preach. The apostle Paul said, **“For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church”** (1 Corinthians 4:17).

Paul’s way of life agreed with what he taught everywhere. There was no discrepancy between what he taught and what he lived. That’s integrity. He has a “good name” to this day, as being, perhaps, the greatest spiritual influence in the world second only to Jesus Christ.

Integrity is the number one quality needed in leadership because it develops trust, and without trust no one will follow a leader. Are you rich in practicing what you preach? Many are poor in this area because they have one standard for others and another standard for themselves. Jesus said about the Pharisees, **“So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach”** (Matt. 23:3). Be like Paul, not like a Pharisee!

## 16. RICH IN CONFIDENCE

Heb. 10:35 **So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.**

Someone has said, “Confidence is courage at ease.” That’s memorable!

Without confidence we do not believe we can. Joyce Meyers says, “Success comes in cans.”

Phil. 4:13 **I can do everything through him who gives me strength.**

\*\*\*\* Caleb is an example of an Old Testament hero in the area of confidence. His confidence was not the “self-confidence” so widely taught by self-help teachers. His confidence was the greater kind, confidence in God. Numbers 13:30 **Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.”**

The belief that you can do amazing things with God’s help is a great treasure.

## 17. RICH IN SIGNIFICANCE

One of the first seven deacons was a man named Stephen. He became the first martyr of the Christian faith. He was rich in good deeds, rich in faith, and rich in anointing and spiritual gifts. Acts 6:8 **Now Stephen, a man full of God’s grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.**

He was rich in revelation, and rich in an intimate relationship with God. But with his early death, he was *not* rich in longevity. Also, his life was too short to accumulate a lot of money. But his life was rich with *significance*—a lasting influence. While dying he said, **“Lord, do not hold this sin against them”** (Acts 7:60). Saul of Tarsus was the focal point of the guilt in this murder but through Stephen’s prayer he became the focal point of divine mercy. *It was the prayer of Stephen that gave Jesus the legal right to reveal Himself to a man who wasn’t seeking Him.* Paul went on to write thirteen books of the Bible. Thus, Stephen’s short life was very RICH in significance.

## 18. RICH IN MONEY

If you’d like to be rich in money, I suggest you read everything you can by author and teacher Robert T. Kiyosaki. His newest book, WHY “A” STUDENTS WORK FOR “C” STUDENTS is marvelously helpful, simply the best out there on the subject of becoming wealthy in money. God would like us to become wealthy in money because it’s certainly better than being poor. However, we must remember that of all the kinds of riches and measurements of true wealth, this is the least. To be lasting, it must be converted into something that *will* last—by using it to do good deeds, win souls, and make disciples. Jesus said, **“I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings”** (Luke 16:9).

**CLOSING:** Wouldn’t it be wonderful to be “rich in every way” as Paul talked about in our text? Why not desire to be rich in all these ways? Why not pray to be rich in all these ways? Why not study and learn to be rich in all these ways? God is able to make all grace abound to you. So ask for it! Ask the Holy Spirit to coach you in the daily disciplines necessary to grow in all these areas.