

Melva's Corner



I Am Rich! Are You?

March 19, 2007

(Romans 8:28)

Central Truth: It's important that you answer, because your whole life is very likely being controlled by that answer. Everything you do is colored by it. Every single facet of your life is shaped by it in some way.

You know how full of love and kindness our Lord Jesus Christ was. Though he was very rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich. (II Corinthians 8:9 NLT)

God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. (II Corinthians 9:8 NLT)

Stop. Think about that question for a moment. Answer it honestly. Let it wind down through your head, past your heart, and into your spirit. Put it into first person. "Am I rich?"

Now, ask it of God. Wait for the answer. "Heavenly Father, am I rich?"

It's very important that you answer, because your whole life is very likely being controlled by that answer. Everything you do is colored by it. Every single facet of your life is shaped by it in some way.

In this life there are at least four answers to this question. Each answer shapes the reality of the person answering in ways that he or she may not realize at first glance.

The first group says, "Of course I'm rich. Look at all the money I have." But then they go home to empty houses filled with all the finest things in life, but devoid of anything even nearly

approximating faith, hope, and love. These are the people who are lost, but don't know it. They can't face, or won't acknowledge how barren their lives really are.

The second group says, "I'm not rich. Look around. I can hardly pay my bills each month. I have no savings, my car just broke down, and I have no idea how I'm ever going to send my kids to college." These people hold "poverty" up like a badge of honor. In reality, their focus on what is bad keeps them in "perpetual bad" without any hope of getting to the blessings God has poured into their lives.

The third group says, "No, I'm not really rich. Even though I have a lot now, something terrible could happen tomorrow, and then where would I be?" These are the people who are just waiting for bad to happen. They can't enjoy what they have for fear losing it all in the future. No matter how much they have now, **fear** is their dominant approach to their blessings. This anxiety effectively negates any positive emotions, making them perpetually feel "poor" and effectively keeping them in "perpetual bad."

And then there is the fourth group.

The first time I thought of this question, the resounding answer throughout my spirit was, "Yes, of course I'm rich!" However, it wasn't until a few minutes later, that when I answered the question I really didn't think of being rich in terms of having money. I simply looked out over the landscape, as I sat on the steps of my home waiting for a neighbor to pay a visit and my answer was simple: "Yes!" How could I answer anything but "Yes!"?

A few days later, I asked the question of someone in exactly the same situation. That person's immediate and resounding response was, "No!"

I was astounded. How could the two of us, basically "in the same boat," respond so differently? The more I reflected on that paradox, the more I learned about how and why I relate to my world the way I do.

When I was younger, a friend told me, "You know, you are so lucky. Everything always works out for you."

At the time I said, “Yea, and I work hard to make sure it does.”

In light of asking this question anew, however, I can see why things work out for me. It’s because I believe that they will work out for me. I focus all my energy toward that end. I pray expectantly for them to work out. I trust God to be at work in my life.

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. (Romans 8:28 NLT)

For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him. (Philippians 3:13)

Even when things don’t work out like I planned, I often find that they were worked out for me even better than I could plan. I find that God worked in them for my continued growth as His child. Then, I feel even richer than before.

A well known motivational speaker uses an exercise where first you “hope” something will work out. He says that when you hope, you see two possibilities: the thing working out and the thing not working out. Then he invites you to “expect” that something will work out. Expecting focuses all of your attention, all of your energy, on the goal being accomplished with no thought to it not working out. When you prayerfully expect consistently, your goals, your dreams, and your plans have no choice but to come into being because your thoughts, and your submission to God, help shape your reality.

So back to our original question: “Are you rich?”

- When you look at your life do you expect things to work out?**
- Do you trust that God is in your life working His will for your blessing?**
- Do you focus all your energy on things working out?**
- Or do you sit back and hope that somehow they will?**

If your answer to the last question is “Yes,” then I’d be willing to bet your answer to the first is “No.” You see, if all you focus upon is how “poor” you are, no matter how great things may actually be in your life, you will find a way to feel “poor” and “bad.”

Sarah Ban Breathnach, best-selling author of *Simple Abundance* and *Something More*, suggests keeping a gratitude journal where every day you write down five things for which you are grateful. This is an excellent way to force your mind to focus on answering a resounding, “Yes!” to our question. So to get us started, I asking you take a moment, right now, and list ten things in your life for which you would not take a million dollars.

Yea, I know there may be a few issues here and there, but I asking you to look at your health, your kids, your family, your spiritual heritage, God’s grace, God’s promises, Jesus’ gift of grace, and a host of other blessings God has lavished upon you.

Now answer the question; “Am I rich?” Then ask yourself, “What do I want to do with the rest of my life?” What is my dream? If I could be anywhere in this life, where would I be? Picture that place in detail. What does it look like? Breathe and fill your lungs with the air of this place. Close your eyes, and see it. Now ask God for His blessing in fulfilling that dream to His glory. If you believe you are rich, if in your soul your answer is a solid, resounding “Yes!”, then with God’s help, you can achieve that dream and just about any other dream you **focus** on. Nothing can stop you.

No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven. (Philippians 3:13-14 NLT)

You may be saying to yourself, “But I’m not rich. I’m not blessed. Look at all these bad things that have happened to me.” Then I urge you; start a grateful journal today. Don’t wait another minute. You don’t have a second to waste. God is pouring His blessing into your life and you are missing them.

Let this be your warning: Do not tell your mind you are poor simply because you don’t have as much money as someone else. When you allow that attitude to flourish, no amount of riches, monetary or otherwise, will ever be enough to make you feel rich. Believe you are blessed, feel you are blessed, focus on how you are blessed every single moment of every single day, and give thanks to God. For when you feel you are blessed and believe you are blessed, more blessings will come to you. You will be rich, no

matter what your bank account says! You will be rich, no matter how your finances compare to the next person.

So, now, let me ask you once more; “Are you rich?”

Be careful. Your answer is shaping more than you think!

Scriptural References:

God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. (II Corinthians 9:8 NLT)