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MEN & MONEY

Men, do you think you sometimes get a bum rap when it comes to work and money? Didn't the Creator hard-wire men for work, analyzing, achieving, and providing for their families? These things relate to a basic sense of fulfillment for most men. After all, God created us as His personal representatives on earth and gave us the charge of dominion over His creation.

Ahh, but you can get sidetracked, can't you. This happened in the Old Testament too. Just before the people entered the Promised Land, God speaks through Moses in Deuteronomy 8, as he tells them to be faithful to God's calling. In verses 1-6 He reminds them to be careful to do His commandments... to remember how God has provided for them... and how as a man trains his son, so the LORD God trains His people. Moses also reminded them "man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD." How are you learning the Lord's training - by reading His Word, the Bible?

God also wants you to be thankful. In verses 7-10, He rehearses the good things the people will soon experience in the Promised Land. God miraculously provided all their needs in the wilderness. And He promises they will bless Him when they enjoy the blessings of life in the Promised Land. It will be full of natural resources, and they will prosper. How are you being trained to be thankful, as you learn to recognize God's providential hand in your life?

God also wants you to be fruitful. And in verses 11-20 God gives warnings about coming trials. In the Promised Land, they could become so prosperous they'll be tempted to forget God. He says, "You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may confirm His covenant." That reminder goes right to the heart of a man's pride. You are created, and everything you are and have to work with comes from the Creator's provision.

Then God points to the pagan nations. If you think and act like pagans, you will get the same results they do. Pagans do not recognize the one true Living God who created all things. Their end is destruction. So do you suppose the men of Israel listened to God's training and warnings?

Nope. History shows they became forgetful. They were not faithful. They were not thankful. They were not fruitful in the things of God. They forged ahead on their own. They neglected the words of God's mouth, and instead gorged themselves on the bounty of the Promised Land, which was as good as God promised. And they lifted up themselves in pride. Then they lifted up pagan idols of wood and stone and their own imaginations. Then they bowed down to the idols they had lifted up. They became fools.

They rejected the one true holy Living God who created them and redeemed them. They rebelled against His rightful claims on their lives. They forgot His commandments, His warnings, and His blessings. And they paid a terrible price.

The same thing happens to you. When you put a premium on your own personal pleasures and pursuits, you pay a price. Oh, you may get everything you want, since God created you with amazing abilities and potentials. But consequences of disobedience are costly. If you want to listen to the voice of the world, the flesh, and the devil, you can probably get whatever you go for. But those rewards become the wages of sin, and result in death.

God's way asks you to trust and obey. He writes down the words of His mouth in the Bible, which gives you His eternal principles for wisdom and true success. Remember, He created you for His purposes. He asks you to be faithful to Him, thankful to Him, and fruitful for Him.

That's the way of true fulfillment. It may even lead to worldly wealth. But you'll find you're most fulfilled when you lay up those treasures in heaven, because the Bible says God blesses His people SO THAT we can bless others. So, trust and obey - by the power of the Holy Spirit given by God to everyone who believes in Jesus as Lord and Savior. The song says, "Only one life, 'twill soon be past. Only what's done for Jesus will last." So true. How are you proving this in your life?