

1 Timothy 6:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

Analysis

For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out (οὐδὲν γὰρ εἰσηνέγκαμεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ὅτι οὐδὲ ἐξενεγκεῖν τι δυνάμεθα, ouden gar eisēnenkamen eis ton kosmon, hoti oude exenenkein ti dynametha)—'we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out.' This proverbial truth (Job 1:21, Ecclesiastes 5:15) exposes materialism's futility.

We enter life naked and empty; we exit the same way. All earthly accumulation is temporary—wealth, possessions, status all remain behind. This reality should relativize our attachment to material things. We're temporary stewards, not ultimate owners. Investments in eternal realities (relationships, character, kingdom work) endure; material accumulation doesn't.

Paul uses this universal truth to ground his teaching on contentment. If we leave everything behind at death, why obsess over acquiring more? Contentment flows from recognizing life's brevity and eternity's reality. Live with open hands, investing in what lasts forever.

Historical Context

Ancient burial practices made death's finality vivid—wealthy Egyptians tried to take possessions into afterlife, but it didn't work. Jews buried people simply,

recognizing we leave everything behind. Paul uses this common knowledge to expose the folly of materialistic pursuit. You can't take it with you, so hold it lightly.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How should life's brevity and death's certainty shape our relationship to possessions?
2. What practical difference does it make to view ourselves as stewards rather than owners?
3. If you can't take it with you, what should you invest in during earthly life?

Interlinear Text

οὐδέν	γὰρ	εἰσηνέγκαμεν	εἰς	τὸν	κόσμον	δῆλον	ὅτι
nothing	For	we brought	into	G3588	this world	and it is certain	G3754
G3762	G1063	G1533	G1519		G2889	G1212	
οὐδὲ	ἐξενεγκεῖν	τι	δυνάμεθα·				
nothing	carry	G5100	we can				
G3761	G1627		G1410				

Additional Cross-References

Job 1:21 (Parallel theme): And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

Psalms 49:17 (Parallel theme): For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

Proverbs 27:24 (Parallel theme): For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?

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